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CURRENT COMMENT.

It now seems likely that by the end of the week, formal obsequies will be held over the Entente, and that France will then proceed to play a lone hand against Germany. First, probably, she will take Germany's principal mineral resources, and then devote herself to prying apart the several German States. This is good news. There is nothing like a show-down to end a harrowing suspense. If Brother Poincaré turns this trick, Europe will at last know where she stands. Doubtless it means another fine war in short order, unless revolution steps in to head it off for the moment; in which case the war will be deferred for a time, but will be all the livelier when it does come.

THE French policy of crushing Middle Europe amounts to putting a fairly close commercial blockade upon England; and we know what always ensues upon anything like that. Then too, Trotzky gave warning the other day that if France brought military pressure to bear on Germany, it would be difficult for Poland to remain passive, and that if Poland acted against Germany, it might be difficult for Russia to remain passive. *Verbum sat sapienti*—we imagine that there are forces in Germany sufficiently astute to take the hint. That would make a fair-to-middling strong line-up—France and Poland (if France could keep her grip on Poland) against Russia and a revolutionized Germany! Dollars to doughnuts, moreover, it would take Great Britain about three days to discover some imperative and highly moral reason for coming in on the side of the despicable Soviet Government. If so, one wonders which way the sympathies of India, China, Canada, Egypt, Australia, would go. It strikes us that Trotzky would make money by paying England to stay out.

WE entertain our readers with these cheerful speculations in order to put off as long as possible any mention of the industrial break-down, for in speaking of that, one simply can not be cheerful. The thing is going from bad to worse with uniformly accelerated motion. The Gaudsaker element in the country, which is an uncommonly large one, is looking towards Washington for relief; and this is about as rational as it would be to look for icebergs along India's coral strand. We hope that the situation will finally enforce a seizure of the railways and mines. We know that in saying this we are giving aid and comfort to the operators, but we are sure

nevertheless that it is the best thing that could happen—the best because it is the worst. We do not want to give the impression of perverseness or of a wanton delight in disorder and distress. Nothing of the kind. We are simply sick of the prospect of any more futile and desperate attempts at palliation, at compromise, accommodation and adjustment of matters which in their nature can no longer be compromised upon and adjusted. Whatever happens to convince the public that palliation is impossible, will be, we are sure, the best thing that can happen.

WHATEVER one may think of Mr. Harding's initial message to Congress on the strike-situation, its effect was disastrous from the viewpoint of a settlement between the operators and the labour-unions. When he appeared before the joint session the Administration had ceased its futile efforts at mediation, and as a result it looked as if there might be some sort of settlement in both the coal-fields and the railway-shops. With the politicians for the moment out of the picture, representatives of the rail-executives and the striking shopmen were discussing their differences amicably in New York; the strike in the bituminous coal-fields appeared on the edge of settlement at the Cleveland conference; and the anthracite miners and the operators seemed to be getting together at Philadelphia. Mr. Harding's message threw all three meetings into disarray. Discord immediately broke out at the railway strike-conferences, and after a few days they dissolved without result. The negotiations for peace in the bituminous fields dwindled to a partial settlement; those for the anthracite fields broke off abruptly, and it was announced that there was little prospect of any anthracite being mined this winter. Meanwhile Mr. Henry Ford announces that because of inability to secure fuel without paying exorbitant prices to profiteers, he will be compelled to close down his plants by the middle of September, thus throwing upwards of 100,000 wage earners out of work.

IN Congress Mr. Harding's industrial recommendations, neither of which has any relevance to the present critical situation, have become pretty thoroughly snagged. The measure to create a fact-finding commission to look into the business of coal-production has at this writing been laid aside in the Senate, in favour of the more congenial business of purchasing several billion dollars worth of votes with the soldier's bonus, at the expense of those taxpayers who may manage to survive the coming glacial period. There is no question of the need for some competent authority to dig essential facts out of the subterranean darkness of our coal-industry. Probably the proposed measure, drawn by Senator Borah, is sensibly expressed and well-intentioned; but melancholy experience has made us utterly sceptical of political agencies of this character. In any event, even if the bill passes, some troglodyte monopolist is more than likely to get the Supreme Court to knock it on the head. In 1920, Congress requested the Federal Trade Commission to get the facts about investments, costs and profits in the coal-industry and appropriated \$150,000 for this purpose, but some interested gentleman had no trouble in securing an injunction to block the inquiry, on the ground that the mining of coal was not an interstate industry. Under our peculiar customs and circumstances, it seems a rule that to run successfully the gauntlet of the courts, a piece of "constructive" legislation must be camouflaged

to appear what it is not, and Mr. Borah's measure is appropriately clothed in the guise of a bill to assure an adequate coal-supply for the District of Columbia; but even hypocrisy does not always pass muster before the mysterious and unaccountable mental processes of the judicial interpreters.

As for Mr. Harding's other pet panacea, the Kellogg bill for the protection of aliens, the attempt of Mr. Lodge's Judiciary Committee to commend it to the Senate without hearings was halted by a storm of protests, and in the ensuing discussions the measure was stripped to all its repulsive nakedness. It would, as its opponents pointed out, enable the Chief Executive to send the army into any State for the "protection" of any alien who happened to be acting as a stool-pigeon for some brand of privilege or monopoly. It would, moreover, as Mr. Basil M. Manly, speaking for the People's Legislative Service, has well expressed it, in effect substitute government by a praetorian guard for the normal processes of civic order. Since no one defended this obnoxious piece of usurpation, it is to be hoped that the law-makers will have a sufficient sense of the proprieties to permit it to gather dust in some committee pigeon-hole. While we have resigned ourselves to the practice of our legislative flivver-factory at Washington in turning out political vehicles of an eighteenth-century model, the reversion to the clumsy Roman chariot of the days of Marius and Sulla seems, for one reason or another, a bit too anachronistic.

WHEN the friends of the family started home from Washington a few months ago, we settled ourselves to sit up alone, in peace and quietness, with the remains of the Conference on the Limitation of Armaments. But the door had no more than closed, when an indecent racket began in the street. Presently we were able to distinguish the voices of Mr. David Lloyd George and M. Poincaré, who were carrying on a debate in English and French, and were apparently unable to understand one another. Then an innocent bystander asked Mr. Lloyd George a question in regard to armaments, and he replied that his Committee on Imperial Defence had adopted a scheme which would add twenty new squadrons, "for home defence," to the Royal Air Force, and increase the budget of the Air Ministry by something more than a million pounds a year. The additional expenditure could be more than made good, he said, by savings effected in other branches of the fighting service; and here he was perhaps thinking of the obsolete ships discarded under the terms of the Washington agreement. When the Premier had finished, some one in the crowd inquired whether the new plans of the Government had been formulated to meet "the enormous development of the air service in France"; and to this question Mr. Lloyd George replied that he and his friends had taken all circumstances into account. A feeble protest in French against the prolongation of the period of compulsory military service then made itself heard, but was drowned out immediately by the clamour of French jingoes under the leadership of M. Poincaré. Down to the present moment, the tumult and the shouting have continued to rise higher and higher against the windows of our diplomatic undertaking parlours; but the placid features of the conference give evidence that here, at least, is peace.

In a world that is likely at any moment to turn all its powers to the business of destruction, the recent developments in the art of aviation are a matter of no small significance. Air-craft can be so quickly and so cheaply constructed that they do not have to be got ready in advance, like battleships, and any peace-time limitation upon their numbers would be of no great significance in the long run. The thing that seems to be most wanted, for effectiveness in war, is the formula for constructing an air-plane that can take off and land in a small space, and can turn the still more important trick of hovering

in a stationary position over its target. The British Air Ministry has been trying to perfect a motor-plane with these capabilities, but the Germans have apparently gone the British one better by turning out a motorless plane that "tacks" across the air-currents in three dimensions, somewhat as a yacht does in two. If this German contrivance can be fitted with an auxiliary engine, its possibilities in the way of long cruising and accurate bombing are too numerous to mention.

In the meantime, it is worth noting that the Powers have already in stock enough airplanes to stall along with for a while, in the event of hostilities. France and Great Britain, at least, are increasing their aerial armaments, and General Mitchell of the American Air Service says that the former Power now holds the lead with two thousand planes in service and more in reserve, while England has six hundred in service, three thousand in reserve, and one thousand under construction. Even Japan will have a thousand air-craft by the time the Washington agreements are one year old, while the United States will be possessed of about two-thirds as many. With inventors in Germany, and inventors and builders in the once-allied countries still working away at their war-machines, it looks as though we might be obliged ultimately to take it for granted that the means of making war will be ready, or can be got ready, whenever they are wanted. If we get that far, we shall be in a position to ask why it is that such things are in demand; and this will indicate that we have arrived somewhere in the neighbourhood of the problem of war and peace.

WE have not heard very much during the last few months about this country's need for a large army, but if the publicists and politicians of Great Britain and France continue to draw comparisons between the fighting forces of their two countries, with a view to the possibility of another war for civilization, the old agitation for an increase of armament is certain to be revived in this country, before the robins "come again next time." In anticipation of the end of the propagandists' armistice, we note down here for future reference the fact that the War Department is making, on paper, an occupational classification of the enlisted personnel of the army, in order that the work of replacing, with soldiers, the miners and railwaymen now on strike, may be carried through in short order, if occasion so demand. A full record of the occupational experience of each recruit is made at the time of enlistment, and the Associated Press says "it is understood" that other experimental mobilizations of the card-files have been made in the past. When the time comes, the possibilities of this novel phase of the war-game should be brought out as clearly as possible—perhaps by the suggestion that the regular army and the militia be put to work for a fortnight each year in the mines or the steel-mills. The gentry who demand that we shall be "better prepared" should by all means be met with the simple question: "Prepared for what?"

WE note that Mr. A. Bruce Bielaski, former guardian of our political innocence, has returned from his romantic misadventures in Mexico, and has reported to the State Department that bolshevism is rampant in that benighted Republic. In proof of this, Mr. Bielaski stated to the newspaper-reporters that he frequently saw the red flag displayed on the streets of Mexican cities. Mr. Bielaski is a sharp observer, and we have excellent reasons for believing that his eyesight did not deceive him; but if he had taken the trouble to make an inquiry on the subject, he would have found that the red flag is commonly displayed in front of butcher-shops in Mexico. It is the sign of the meat-man in that country, just as among us, the striped pole is the symbol of the barber and the coloured globes are the insignia of the apothecary. Mr. Bielaski might also have ascertained that among certain

of the Mexican peons the red flag is considered an infallible means of warding off celestial displeasure, and is hung out to avert the misfortunes which are supposed to follow after the appearance of shooting stars and like phenomena. Even ignorant persons who have never heard of either bolshevism or Bielaski, put faith in signs and omens. The ability to observe is an excellent quality; but its value is somewhat reduced when it is not backed up by intelligence. Perhaps the Attorney-General will now commission Mr. Bielaski to report on the prevalence of bolshevism at our railway crossings and among auction-room crowds.

RECENTLY we discussed at some length the methods employed by American functionaries to saddle the Republic of Haiti with a new loan, and thus to convert the Haitian Government into a tax-gathering agency for bond-holders in this country. We called attention to the fact that the voting of the loan by the Haitian legislature had given rise to a protest which the native Government was obliged to suppress by force; and at this point we left the subject, with a sense of relief and a great disinclination to return. However, we feel that we are morally obliged to make use of new evidence that shows just how necessary the American military occupation is for the maintenance of the native Government which in turn maintains the mechanism of taxation.

In a recent issue of the *Moniteur*, the official journal of the Haitian Republic, there appears a proclamation in which the American High Commissioner remarks that "a very active campaign has been inaugurated by certain persons, directed against the Haitian Government," and that "such agitation is a menace to the condition of law and order which now prevails . . . and tends to undermine the authority of the officials of the Haitian Government"; wherefore the High Commissioner finds it necessary to invite the attention of the natives once more to the American proclamation of 26 May, 1921, in which the people of the country are forbidden to employ the written or spoken word to "cast discredit" upon the forces of the United States, or the Government of Haiti. The original proclamation last mentioned was issued under the power and authority of martial law and is still maintained in the same manner; and this lawless and disorderly procedure of course casts so much discredit upon the Government which sanctions it, and even upon the Government which submits to it, that the Haitian protestants could not possibly magnify the scandal, even if they tried.

ON the eve of his departure for a junket to South America, Mr. Hughes issued a statement about Cuba, calculated to show how well our island-neighbours are getting on under the protective aegis of Major-General Crowder. In the light of the recent disclosures concerning the General's having acted as messenger-boy for Senator Sorghum—beg pardon, we would say Smoot—in his effort to curtail the Cuban sugar-crop, probably such an outgiving was to be expected, particularly since certain progressive elements in the South American countries which Mr. Hughes will visit have shown a lively concern over the cat-and-mouse brand of independence which the powerful imperialism of the north has bestowed upon Cuba.

THE Cuban reforms which Secretary Hughes so smugly cites relate almost exclusively to more efficient methods of collecting taxes and a more vigorous system of handling the national finances, and it is to be noted that these "reforms" serve the purpose of making the forthcoming Cuban loan, which the Cuban Congress, under the urgings of American advisers, is about to vote upon, a better business proposition for the American bankers who will float it. Not long ago we noticed in a liberal Spanish periodical an article by a Cuban patriot who stated that no inconsiderable section of the Cuban popu-

lation now looked back wistfully on the bad old days when Cuba was a dependency of the Spanish crown. Probably, for the mass of the underlying population, there are advantages in being colonial subjects of an incompetent monarchy 3000 miles away, rather than citizens of an independent republic under an American major-general.

WHEN irrelevant and immaterial considerations are imported into the realm of the arts, the mistake is inevitably punished by a perversion of taste. A case in point is furnished by the report, in the current issue of the *Crisis*, that the two omnipotent theatrical booking-offices of the country have refused to open the theatres on their circuits to the Negro musical show, "Shuffle Along." The American public puts up with loathly fare in this line, and it really does not deserve anything as good as the playful performance of this Negro company; if it did, it might get from its own favourites something much better than they now provide. In particular, the public does not deserve the enjoyment that is to be had out of this delightful show, because its own prejudice against the Negro gives support to the apparent prejudice of the managers themselves. Still the fact remains that the public is being deprived of an opportunity to enjoy itself, and at the same time to improve its taste, while the theatrical profession is losing the stimulus that would come out of contact and competition with a troupe of youthful and enthusiastic players who really know their business. When the profession and the public once realize what they are missing, they will mend their ways accordingly; and in the meantime, we must get what consolation we can out of the thought that in so far as the parties concerned are guilty of prejudice, their punishment is by construction self-inflicted, and amply well-deserved.

FOR two years the Topeka *Daily Capital*, Senator Capper's paper, has been playing a new game, in which hundreds of its readers, from the Governor of the State down to the traffic cop, and from a pawnbroker to the Bishop of the Diocese, have been taking an interest. The *Capital* asks its readers to write to the editor about the books that they like, limiting their contributions to three hundred words, and it prints one letter a day, under the head, "I've Been Reading." We suppose that nowhere but in Kansas can so catholic a display of taste be found. In the list of books thus reviewed we come across our old friend "John Halifax, Gentleman," who, we thought, had been buried deep under ground many years ago. "The Swiss Family Robinson" caught the fancy of one reader, while another discoursed on the "Wesleyan Methodist Magazine for 1825." Three bright Kansans picked the Bible, but the lonely "Count of Monte Cristo" had only one chance. A hardy soul undertook to write about "Familiar Quotations," presumably Bartlett's, while another, whose age we should guess to be fifty-five, discussed "The Breadwinners," the anonymous literary effort of one who was later to be a Secretary of State. Culture in Kansas must look like pudding-stone, and in our capacity of general mediator and assuager, we commend the interesting list to Will and Henry, to make them forget their differences upon their next meeting.

The editors can not be responsible for manuscripts submitted, but if return postage be enclosed, they will do all in their power to see that rejected manuscripts are returned promptly.

It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily agree with the opinion of the editors, either as to substance or style. They are printed because, in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.

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TOPICS OF THE TIME.

THE LIBERAL'S RABBINISM.

WE have often spoken in deprecation of liberalism, finding fault with its shortcomings from several points of view. It is disappointing therefore, or would be if we were sensitive to such things, occasionally to hear ourselves still spoken of as liberals and this paper spoken of as an organ of liberalism. The other day, for example, we read a couple of pages of lively vituperation of liberalism addressed to us by a correspondent who imagined that he was taking us severely to task. We could only reply that we cordially agreed with his estimate of liberalism, but that as far as we were concerned he was quite off the mark, since this is not a liberal paper; indeed, that it would be about as accurate to call the *Scientific American* an organ of Methodism or the *Baltimore Sun* an organ of prohibition, as to speak of this paper as an organ of liberalism. It is a small matter, of course; for we are aware that in the popular, graduated scale of speech the content of these terms is by no means fixed, and that they are permitted to do duty for one another indifferently, so that one is pleasantly reminded sometimes of the father who told his inquiring child that ensilage is a kind of mucilage. Not long ago we read an essay on radicalism, written by a person who was apparently more apt at writing than at thinking; and we were interested to find there an intimation that in the view of this paper, the content of radicalism is only "that ancient heresy, the single tax."

So it seems advisable that when circumstances furnish an opportunity, we should occasionally call attention to some essential difference between radicalism and liberalism. We notice that some of our liberal friends in England have lately been pushing the political fortunes of Lord Robert Cecil; we notice too that one of our liberal contemporaries here has become much interested in pushing those of Senator Borah. This moves us to remark an inveterate and incurable Rabbinitism as a differentiation of the liberal from the radical. The liberal believes that government, under the existing economic order, can be administered for the public welfare if only you find a man who is good enough and strong enough to be equal to the task. Hence he can not long do without his Rabbi; he is always looking for the great good man, always finding and touting him, and then always discovering that the great good man does not come through. The liberal is always preoccupied with persons, always fixing his hopes upon some Wilson, Hoover, Borah, invariably disappointed and invariably trying again. One would suppose that after this process had been gone through with unfailing regularity a reasonable number of times, it would occur to anyone to look into these failures a little more deeply and see whether there were not some reason for them more fundamental than mere human frailty; but apparently it never occurs to the liberal to do this.

The radical, on the other hand, knows that it is absolutely impossible, under the present economic order, for government to be administered for the public welfare, no matter who may be set to do it. The present economic order is that of privately-owned monopoly, and government is itself primarily the agent of that order. There can be no doubt about that. Therefore those who administer government must serve that order, no matter what their desires may be or what judgment their reason and conscience may make upon the matter. Hence the radical has no tempta-

tion to Rabbinitism, no special concern with persons. We, for example, are quite as well impressed by Senator Borah as our liberal contemporary. We are heartily for him, if he wants the Presidency. But we do not for one moment permit ourselves the monstrous fatuity of thinking that if Mr. Borah were President, the course of our public affairs would change significantly for the better, for we know that it would, and could, do nothing of the kind.

In a general way, the remarkable deterioration in the personnel of government is, in the view of the radical, not to be altogether deplored. The liberal observer, naturally, is much depressed by the indisputable fact that "the wider the circle from which politicians and State functionaries are recruited, the lower seems their intellectual level to have sunk"—and their moral level as well. But the radical is not depressed, for the nature and purpose of government being what it is, this development is logical; and moreover it is salutary, as leading more swiftly and directly towards a change in the economic order. The important thing is to get inculcated in the public mind that what we have been calling democracy is not democracy at all, but only republicanism; that democracy is an affair primarily of economics, not of politics; that democracy has not failed, for it has never been tried; that the antithesis of democracy is not autocracy or monarchy but *absolutism*, and that this can exist just as well in a republic as in a monarchy, and sometimes flourishes even better there. The deterioration in the personnel of government is of great help to the inculcation of these truths; Mr. Hughes and Mr. Hoover have already done more for it than a hundred radical philosophers could do if they all lived to be as old as Methusaleh. M. Poincaré has done more for it in Europe than a hundred Lenins; indeed, Trotzky spoke the simple truth last week when he said that he and Lenin had only to sit still and let their misguided brother Poincaré do their propaganda-work for them. The liberal's advocacy of good men for office, therefore, seems to be in itself a disservice to the public, although we do not like to say so, because the liberal, according to his lights, means so well. Yet things have already gone so far, and are going so fast, that it makes little practical difference, probably, after all.

Coming back to our text, we hope that we have succeeded in showing the marks by which, in one essential respect, the radical is to be differentiated from the liberal. Wherever one observes the unhistorical and parietic disposition to promote "good men for office," there, ten to one, is a mark of liberalism—provided of course that it be honest and not put on by way of mere subterfuge. Radicalism, by reason of its theory of the State, does not give thirty seconds thought to the character or personality of any candidate for public office, for it knows too well the fundamental conditions which will determine his activity, be he ever so good or ever so bad.

PITY THE POOR FISH.

It is *on dit* that during the first campaign of Woodrow Wilson for the Presidency, that astute politician, Mr. Charles F. Murphy, vouchsafed to the Wilsonian uplifters a single piece of advice. Under the stress of certain slashing attacks by the Hearst newspapers, Mr. Wilson had been manœuvred into making a purely defensive battle, and things were not going well, when one day Mr. Murphy unexpectedly appeared at the national campaign-headquarters and delivered himself of the following dictum: "When they've got

the goods on you, don't try to defend yourself: make a big noise about something else." Apparently this rule of deportment found a permanent abiding-place in the hearts of the Wilsonian brotherhood, for whenever in later days of stress, the Wilson Administration directed a particularly atrocious usurpation against our liberties or our purses, the official tom-tom beaters made a deafening diversion.

The most successful red herring of those days was the Red Peril. Time after time, as a zealous officialdom held up this painted bogey, the country gasped with horror and tremulous editors begged the Government to abolish a few more of our constitutional liberties in order to abate the peril. In time, of course, the thing became a bore, and even the most nervous Rotarian ceased to shiver when he read over his morning coffee a statement by the Attorney-General that that dignity had been blown up again by Lenin and Trotzky, or that two illiterate Finns who spoke no English had been seized in the very act of taking over our Government. So, after a considerable run, the comedy petered out.

Now we note that it has been revived and offered to the public in a somewhat altered form. A lady in Washington, D. C., whose mentality has been upset by trying to follow too closely the spiritualist doctrines of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, is committed to an asylum; and as soon as she is safely incarcerated a high official confides to the press that she was an agent of the Soviet Government. The next day a dangerous Bolshevik plotter is reported arrested on a White Star liner as it steams into the harbour of New York. According to the officials, the miscreant is a member of a Russian order which sponsors the pernicious doctrine of "rebuilding a strong and powerful Russia without the assistance of foreign concessionaires and profit-mongers." At the same time comes the news from Chicago that the office of Mr. W. Z. Foster has been raided, in his absence, and a trunkful of evidence of "radical activities"—of an unspecified nature, of course—has been seized. The official who engineered the raid offered no legal excuse for smashing Mr. Foster's office and stealing his papers. He stated merely that the raid was made because a State official out in Colorado had declared that Mr. Foster was "a dangerous radical," and because two sticks of dynamite were found in a Chicago railway-yard. The story got a good press. "Connect Plot to Wreck Trains with Raid on Radical Leader," ran the weasel head-line in the far-away Washington *Star*, giving the obvious impression that Mr. Foster might have planted the dynamite. Of course the yarn implicated Mr. Foster in the alleged dynamite plot no more than the *Star's* grandmother, who, if we are to judge by the almost prehistoric social views entertained by that newspaper, must be a very old lady indeed.

In this new Masque of the Red Death the Cabinet officers and their underlings have eagerly been doing their bit. The Attorney-General led off with a solemn warning that the wicked I. W. W.'s had broken loose again, this time in the railway-strike. They aimed to overthrow the Government, declared Mr. Daugherty, and in a more playful vein he added that he had no doubt that they would be glad to take over the transportation-system of the country. To an impertinent reporter who asked Mr. Daugherty for some specifications, he made the astonishing admission that he had no facts on which to base his serious accusations; apparently they were made merely on the general principle that a Cabinet officer must make an ass of himself periodically in order to live up to his position. Nor was Mr.

Daugherty's strategic position at all improved, in our opinion, by the prompt reply of the I. W. W. Their organization, wrote the secretary of their Railway Workers Industrial Union, would gladly take over responsibility for railway-transportation in this country, but as for assuming the reins of government, they respectfully begged to be excused. "We have no interest in directing any of the affairs which are now directed at the White House," he added. Since this interchange of courtesies, Mr. Daugherty has continued to emit general charges to the effect that the I. W. W. are engaged in blowing up trains and performing other acts of violence in connexion with the strikes; but up to the present writing he has displayed not a paper rouble's worth of evidence to back his assertions. If he has such evidence he seems uncommonly slow about laying it before the proper authorities; if he has none, we can think of no valid reason why he should continue this line of fiction.

The next revelation was the story of the great Red plot to smuggle hordes of Bolshevik agents into this country from Cuba for the purpose of overthrowing the Government; a concoction that was wafted over the land from coast to coast by the ever-faithful Associated Press. It is difficult to understand how this plot has been carried out under the very nose of our own General Crowder, who has been acting as grand panjandrum of the Republic of Cuba for the past eighteen months; yet the Secretary of Labour declared that 100,000 Communist agents of Lenin had already crept into our unsuspecting land, and Big Chief Burns, of the Department of Justice, who is said to be the greatest detective since Baron Munchausen, asserted that the number was 300,000. Since we have been repeatedly told by our all-knowing rulers that there are fewer than 600,000 Communists in all Russia, it would appear that by this expedition Lenin must have reduced the proportion of his followers among the home-folks to a very light leaven indeed. Mr. Burns further stated that some 30,000 of these alien propagandists had been planted in our prisons and poorhouses. This would indicate a diabolical cunning on the part of the Bolsheviks, as well as an intimate knowledge of American conditions. These meddling Russians appear to be well aware that if the Federal Government continues its present career of repression and extravagance, the majority of the taxpayers will eventually be housed in the prisons and poorhouses, where they will fall a ready prey to communist arguments.

After all this official smoke came a real burst of flame in the announcement that several hundred of Chief Burns's gunmen, assisted by squadrons of State troopers and police, had most spectacularly averted the overthrow of the Government by arresting a dozen alleged Communists, all unarmed, who were said to have met for conversations in the Michigan woods. Chief Burns's romantic snoopers explained to the breathless reporters that they had actually dug up two barrels buried by the miscreants. One was stuffed with typewriters and mimeograph apparatus. The other contained plans, "written by secretaries of Lenin and Trotzky," to replace Mr. Harding's Administration by a soviet Government, plans for taking over the army and navy, and pamphlets advocating "the utmost in revolutionary tactics," whatever those may be. This nonsense was followed by a general round-up of "suspected persons" in Michigan and neighbouring States, quite in the lawless manner of the piping times of the late unlamented Attorney-General Palmer. Among those arrested was Mr. W. Z. Foster, who

asserts that he remained quietly at his home in Chicago during all this uproar. Probably he was gathered in because he is one of the few labour-leaders in this country who have exhibited any sense of economic values.

It was announced that all the prisoners would be tried in Michigan under that State's criminal anarchy law, one of the most pernicious of the repressive statutes inflicted on American citizens while politicians and profiteers were extorting their blood and treasure to make the world safe for democracy. Under this act a citizen who utters unfavourable criticism of Mr. Harding's literary style is liable to twenty years in the cooler for conspiring to bring the Government into disrepute; so if a judge and jury can be found insane enough to uphold this law, we hesitate to contemplate the fate of those citizens upon whom Mr. Burns has laid violent hands.

We wish Mr. Harding could take the members of his Cabinet on a tour of the reactionary countries of Europe, in order that they might absorb the elements of democratic tolerance. It might do them good to watch Communist deputies freely thumbing their noses at the impassive M. Poincaré across the French Chamber, or hurling anathemas at capitalism in the Italian Parliament. Perhaps after witnessing such scenes from the normal political life of Europe, Mr. Daugherty would be less inclined to conscript an army of deputies at public expense to capture a handful of economic heretics gathered together in the lonely places of the Western forests, which, if we may judge from some samples of American communist oratory that have come to our attention, form an excellent environment for such convocations.

One can only guess at the cause of this revival of violence and lawlessness, accompanied by a barrage of poison-gas, on the part of American officialdom. We are inclined to deprecate the theory that Messrs. Burns and Daugherty are subtle agents of the Third International, striving by their peculiar antics to throw our form of Government into disrepute. Perhaps the heads of our bureaucracy are acting merely under the incorrigible political instinct to squander as much of the taxpayer's money as possible. Perhaps they are merely "making a noise about something else." What with the approach of the congressional elections, combined with the hopeless muddle to which their ineptitude and ignorance and dishonesty have brought our public affairs, they have ample cause to turn to a frantic search for a red herring, be it even a poor, worn herring that has already been dragged about until it is scarcely more than bones.

THE FRAGRANT DIPLOMAT.

THE Russian Revolution took a relatively light toll of life and limb, but it has certainly made up the deficit by what it did to institutions and reputations. We see by an article in the London *Daily Herald* that the Soviet Government has published another batch of documents from that nest of spicery, the Tsarist Foreign Office, relating to responsibility for the war. We admire the way that these brethren have of managing publicity for this subject. They have been industriously foraging amongst the old Tsarist archives ever since the Revolution, and no one knows how much material of a compromising nature they have discovered. They do not turn loose this material all at once upon the public; they dole it out a little at a time, and choose the moment with excellent sagacity. They began by publishing the secret treaties at precisely the right time;

and ever since, whenever international affairs reached an appropriate juncture, they have managed to enliven the occasion with something new and striking.

Experience suggested to us that they were about due to break out again; and now an article by Mr. E. D. Morel in the *Herald* of 11 August, informs us that they have published the minutes of the conferences between the French and Russian military staffs in 1911, 1912 and 1913. From the *Herald's* summaries and quotations, we judge that these documents drive the last nail in the coffin of the lies concocted and promoted by the Entente Powers about the origins of the war, and that they throw the last spadeful of earth upon the reputations of those who promoted these lies. For example, we know how we in America were inundated by the "mad dog" theory of an innocent and unsuspecting Europe, pounced upon by a footpad Germany. We know how insistently those pliant organs of the British Foreign Office which operate in this country under the name of newspapers, represented the Allied Powers as "taken by surprise"—even now, actually, one or two of them are sometimes impudent enough to print this fiction. Well, at the conference of 1913, the French chief of staff (Joffre) states that—

France will utilize on her north-east frontier the virtual totality of her forces, which will exceed by more than 200,000 men the total provided in the Convention [the Franco-Russian military convention of August 1892]; that the concentration of the fighting-elements on that frontier will be complete in its major part on the *tenth* day of mobilization, and that the offensive [will begin] in the morning of the eleventh day.

The Russian chief of staff (Gilinsky) engages that Russia will operate against Germany with at least 800,000 men, that concentration will be in its major part complete on the fifteenth day, and that the offensive will begin immediately thereafter.

The French plan of campaign was set out at the conference of 1912 by Joffre. In it we find this item, with its interesting reference to a provision of the Franco-Russian military convention of 1892, just *twenty years before*:

The whole mass of the French forces is concentrated from the first on the German frontier. The total will largely exceed the figure of 1,300,000 provided for in the Convention of 1892. Moreover, the French staff is introducing into the network of railways new improvements, which will enable an acceleration of one or two days in concentration, and in one year's time will allow of an advance on Germany's (concentration). A sum of eleven million francs is being now devoted to this work.

But these were purely defensive projects, no doubt, and gotten together only hypothetically and without any very definite notion that anything was really going to happen. They were measures of reasonable preparedness, such as one would be justified in having in the back of one's mind while keeping an eye on a dangerous neighbour, eh, what? Perhaps. That is the theory of our friend the New York *Tribune*, so one can not say that it is utterly preposterous and impossible; but really—really, now—well, anyway, we remark that the minutes of all three conferences contain the following, with another damaging reference to the provisions of that confounded agreement of August, 1892, that had been in force *for twenty years*:

The two chiefs of staff declare by common accord that the words 'defensive war' must not be interpreted as a war to be conducted defensively. On the contrary, they place on record the absolute necessity for the Russian and French armies to adopt a vigorous and as far as possible simultaneous offensive, in accordance with Article 3 of the Convention, by which the forces of the two contracting Powers 'shall come into full action with all speed' (*s'engagent à fond et en toute diligence.*)

We wonder whether President Wilson ever really took stock in this notion of a defenceless and unsuspecting Europe, pounced upon by a highwayman. Probably he did. The British Foreign Minister, Sir Edward Grey, said that in August, 1914, he had not seen the terms of the Franco-Russian agreement, and perhaps really he did not know what they were, although we mightily doubt it; but it is quite likely that Mr. Wilson never saw or heard of them, and much more likely that he would not have known what to make of them if a certified copy had been furnished him. The French and Russian brethren who engineered these conferences, however, seemed to know them well enough. These were, on the French side, Generals Dubail, Berthelot and Joffre; and the memoranda of the first two conferences are countersigned also by the French Ministers of War, Messimy and Millerand (now President of the Republic). On the Russian side, they were Gilinsky and the delectable Ignatiev, military attaché in Paris, of whom we have heard before. What these apostles of sweetness and light knew about the Franco-Russian agreement of 1892 was plenty and to spare. They knew it from its birth, they were brought up with it, and were as well acquainted with it during those twenty years as Mr. Wilson was with the curriculum of Princeton University—even better acquainted with it, probably. You bet they were.

But at all events, Great Britain's skirts were clear of all this plotting and conniving. Let us see. The British Government was interpellated as follows concerning its obligations to engage in military operations on the Continent in the event of war between France and Germany: on 11 June, 1914, by Mr. Joseph King and Sir William Byles; on 28 April, 1914, by Mr. King; on 24 March, 1913, on 6 December, 1911, and again earlier in that year. To all these questions the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary returned an unqualified negative. Great Britain was under no military obligation of any kind. Yet the memorandum of the conference of 1911 records General Dubail's statement to Gilinsky, that—

The French army can be concentrated as rapidly as the German army, and, as from the twelfth day, is in a position to take the offensive against Germany *with the help of the British army on its left flank.*

That rather tends to make an attentive reader prick up his ears, and wonder, in the phrase of the race-course, where the forethoughtful Dubail got the dope. Not from the published proceedings of the House of Commons, certainly, for almost at that very moment the Prime Minister was assuring Mr. Gordon Harvey, and the Foreign Secretary was assuring Mr. Jowett, that Britain was under no obligation to render military or naval assistance to any other Power. Again, in the minutes of the conference of 1913, it is set forth that in the event of war (*italics ours*),

telegraphic communication can be exchanged between the two headquarters staffs of France and Russia by British cables and by the intermediary of Britain. *The conventions with London have just been concluded; the arrangements have been made and the communications can function.*

What a system! one says in disgust—a system that can not be competently served except by liars and crooks, that can not maintain itself except by the most hideous and frightful debauchery of the intelligence and conscience of whole peoples! We hear from the works of Dr. Nicolai and others, that the doom of Western civilization is impending, which may be the case, and again may not. If so, and if this sort of thing represents the best public account that Western

civilization can give of itself, we can not get up any great fever of anxiety over the chance of its dissolution.

CULTURAL NATIONALISM.

Not long since, we found ourselves engaged in conversation with a visitor from overseas, who had just seen for the first time the two huge railway-terminals in New York City. "They are splendid," he said. "In them I see a genuine expression of the American creative genius. They are *yours*, because you are an American. They express *you*." In the course of the next half-hour, our visitor expressed emphatically the opinion that the people of this country must remain in a condition of spiritual under-nourishment until they have evolved an art which is distinctively American and is therefore peculiarly fitted to their spiritual needs.

If the individual man be primarily a "national being," then of course he can realize himself only in so far as he shares in, and helps to develop a "national culture." Obviously it should be his business to concentrate his attention upon such works of art as his countrymen have produced, to emphasize the national qualities of these productions, and to make these qualities the special source of his enjoyment and inspiration. Under certain circumstances, however, this procedure leads to results which may fairly be called fantastic. During the nineteenth century, for example, the educated men of more than one small nationality in Eastern Europe deliberately turned their backs upon the highly developed language and the rich literature of their imperial masters, and shut themselves up within the confines of a peasant-speech and a collection of folk-songs. According to the theory of the nationalists, the way of escape lies now through the creation by each of these nationalities of a great national literature; but how long do they think it will be before Latvia, for instance—a country of German landlords and Russian governors—will produce a Goethe, a Schiller, a Pushkin, a Dostoevsky, a Tolstoy?

If it be true that man is primarily a *national* being—if he be born to his national culture, as men were born to their social station in the feudal age—then the quality of his national inheritance is all-important, for nothing that does not belong to his nation can ever really belong to him. If, on the other hand, the individual is first and foremost a *human* being, the national classification can have no primary significance; the richest national heritage is a handicap, unless he learn to disregard its limitations, and the poorest birthright is a blessing if its poverty drive him out into the broad field of humanism.

If the humanist is right, the great hope of culture in America lies in the fact that we in this country have not yet agreed upon a definition of "American culture." The greatness of our opportunity consists in the very fact that thus far we have set up no definite boundaries of nationality where culture is concerned. So long as nothing belongs to us as a nation, there is nothing that may not belong to us as individuals; so long as our taste has not been nationalized, there is always the possibility that it will be humanized. The humanist knows that in the realm of the arts, the one criterion of the right to possess is the ability to enjoy; he sets up before the artist those models that are, by the canons of art itself, the best, and his taste fosters and stimulates, where nationalism coddles and deforms.

FROM THE CHINESE MORALISTS.

(Translated from the Chinese by Mayling Soong.)

THE TWO WIVES OF SHENG.

THE two wives of Sheng were the daughters of the Emperor Yau. The elder was named Ngoo Wang, and the younger, Yuen Ying. Sheng had a thick-headed father, Koo Ser, a fretful mother, and a younger brother, Ziang, conceited, lazy, and insolent. Nevertheless, Sheng was kind to his brother, and filial to his parents, in spite of which his mother despised him and adored Ziang. But Sheng continued to be filial and harboured no revengeful or wicked feelings. Seeing this, an official of the Emperor Yau recommended him to the Emperor who, in order that he might find out what sort of man Sheng really was, bestowed the two princesses upon him as wives.

Let us now turn to the princesses. After they became Sheng's wives, they served him faithfully and attended to his wants both at home and in the fields. In spite of the fact that they were the daughters of the Son of Heaven, they were neither lazy nor haughty, but on the contrary, unassuming, gentle, respectful, and industrious, for they sought to follow the precepts of perfect wifely conduct.

One day Sheng's father and brother agreed upon a plan to murder him by sending him to the granary. Sheng went to his wives and said, "My parents have commanded me to clean up the granary. I am on my way there now."

"Go," replied his wives.

He then went to the granary and ascended the ladder to the loft; whereupon his brother Ziang removed the ladder, while Koo Ser set fire to the building.

But Sheng escaped.

Then Ziang once more conspired with his parents. This time they schemed to send Sheng down the well. So he again went to his wives and told them that he had been ordered to descend into the well to dig it deeper. And they again said, "Go this time also."

He descended into the well and immediately the conspirators covered the opening securely to prevent his escape. But Sheng managed gradually to work his way out and so he was not killed this time, either.

Before long, his father thought to kill him by first making him drunk to the point of helplessness, and so ordered him to drink wine. Sheng as before went to his wives and told them of his father's command. Immediately the two princesses gave him some secret medicine to offset the effects of the wine. Thus Sheng drank and drank all day, but the wine had no effect upon him.

Sheng's younger sister, having seen through all the snares set for him, now pitied him greatly and became a true friend to his wives.

In spite of his parents' attempt to kill him, Sheng still bore no resentment. Whenever his grief grew too heavy to be borne in silence, he went to the fields and there, sobbing, he would cry out, "O merciful, enlightened, all-knowing Heaven! My father! My mother!" No matter how much he suffered, never for a moment did he cease to think tenderly of his parents, or did he ever blame his brother, Ziang. He strove always to be virtuous, upright, industrious, and persevered in good habits.

He held successive posts as Pah Kwei, and Inspector of the Four Gates; and as Expert of Forest Woods, he visited the bases of great mountains. The Emperor Yau tested him in innumerable ways, nor found him wanting, for in every case Sheng consulted with his two wives. Finally Yau abdicated in favour of Sheng, and he inherited the throne and became Emperor. Ngoo Wang became Empress, and Yuen Ying, Royal Concubine. His brother, Ziang, Sheng appointed to an official position at Yeu Bee; his parents, Sheng cared for as tenderly as formerly.

The world commended the two wives of Sheng for their wise, clear-sighted, virtuous, and charitable conduct.

During his reign, Sheng travelled extensively. On one of his trips of inspection, he died at Tsong Ngoo. He was known also as Zoong Wo, meaning "double pupils." His two wives died at Kiang Siang and are called by posterity the Siang Ladies.

They are described as "two ladies perfect in virtue, true hearted in all things."

The Shu Ching said of them: "Their virtues, although no longer visible, are felt through their influence in a hundred diverse ways."

(From "Stories of Famous Women in Chinese History.")

THE WIFE OF WU LING.

Mrs. Wu was the wife of Wu Ling Tse Tsoong of Tsu'i. The King of Tsu'i, having heard of Wu Ling's virtues, desired him as Prime Minister. And so it came to pass that messengers, bearing one hundred *yih* of gold, were dispatched to Wu Ling's home for the purpose of inviting him to accept the appointment.

When the messengers had made known their mission, Wu Ling Tse Tsoong said, "Your humble servant has a broom and dustpan of a wife. Allow me to consult with her first."

Then he went inside to his wife, saying, "The King of Tsu'i desires to have me for his Prime Minister and has sent messengers bearing gold. Were I Prime Minister to-day, then on the morrow I might possess a legion of horses and chariots. And as for delicacies, I might have ten feet of sumptuous viands spread before me. Should I not accept?"

"My master," replied his wife, "you weave straw sandals for a living; it is not as though you lacked a trade. On your left lies your lute, on your right, your books; between these is your happiness, in them is your whole joy. Legions of horses, strings of chariots in which you might ride; of what benefit would they be to you other than to rest your knees? Sumptuous feasts spread ten feet before you, of what would they consist except viands? For a chance to rest your knees and for a taste of meat, then, you would undertake the responsibilities and sorrows of the Tsu'i Kingdom. Besides, these are troublous times. What with constant uprisings and upheavals, would you not have cause for anxiety? Your humble handmaiden speaks thus, apprehensive for her master's life."

So Wu Ling went out, thanked the messengers, and declined the post. Then, fearing the wrath of the King of Tsu'i, he and his wife forthwith fled to another place where Wu Ling changed his occupation and became a gardner, the better to escape detection.

Posterity praised Wu Ling's wife for her far-sightedness, clear-headedness, and freedom from covetousness.

(From "Stories of Famous Women in Chinese History.")

SHIH CH'IAO, THE COUNSELLOR.

CHUANG KUNG, KING OF WEI, took Chuang Chiang, the sister of Te-Ch'en, the Prince of Chi, to be his wife. Chuang Chiang was fair to look upon, but was barren. Whereupon the people of Wei made a song unto her, praising her comeliness and bemoaning her affliction. And then Chuang Kung took to wife Li Kuei of Chen, and she conceived and bare a son and his name was called Hsiao Po. And lo, Hsiao Po died early. Now, therefore, Chuang Kung took to wife Tai Kuei, the sister of Li Kuei, and when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, she bare a son and called his name Hui. And Chuang Chiang took and nourished Hui as though he had been her own. And a handmaid of the King next bare him a son, Chou Hsu, whom he loved, and who found favour in his sight. Chou Hsu delighted in battle and his father restrained him not. And Chuang Chiang's anger waxed great against him.

And it came to pass that Shih Ch'iao, the King's adviser, went unto the King, saying, "Behold, thy servant hath heard, greater love hath no man for his son than that which teacheth him to walk in the way of righteousness and restraineth him from the path of iniquity.

"For pride, wastefulness, vice, and slothfulness are trespasses of the wicked; and these four come from soft ease and foolish love. And if thou hast chosen Chou Hsu to be king over thy land, I pray thee, let thy will be known unto thy people. Howbeit, if thou art not of that mind, why then, O King, dost thou prepare the way to destruction?"

"Moreover, to be loved and be not proud, to be proud and still be humble, to be humble and be not resentful, to be resentful and withal serene; is such a one as he to be found? To lift up the lowly above the high-placed, honour the younger before the elder, favour the stranger above the kinsman, cast aside the old for the new, set up the lesser over the greater, and let the iniquitous harm the righteous; these be the six transgressions against the laws of Heaven.

"The uprightness of the king, the fidelity of officials, the clemency of the father, the devotion of the son, the affection of the elder brother, and the respect of the younger brother; these are the six fulfilments of the laws of Heaven. To act contrary to these is destruction. Let kings cast aside the harmful. Wherefore court destruction?"

But the King hearkened not. And Chuang Kung was gathered to his fathers and Hui reigned in his stead and Hur, son of Shih Ch'iao became enamoured of Chou Hsu. His father reproved him, but he inclined not his ear and Shih Ch'iao went back into his own house.

(From the "Spring and Autumn Annals" of Confucius.)

A TRAGEDY OF GENIUS.

THE attitude of forlorn despair which finds perpetual recurrence in the minds of certain types of human beings when they come to look beneath the surface of existence, has never, perhaps, been given more complete and final expression than in the poetry of James Thomson. There remains indeed nothing further to be said, for this unfortunate man has found it in him to curse the womb that bare him and the paps which he has sucked and to outface God and go down into the pit at last with his terrible avowals still unretracted.

James Thomson was born in 1834, of Scots parentage. His father was a sea-captain, and a man apparently as capable of holding his own against the storms of the Atlantic as was his son against those other more terrible gales that beat in upon him from eternity. For six days, we are told, the master of the good ship "Eliza Stewart" never left the bridge; stood there, in fact, until carried below broken and paralysed; and up to the very last year of his tragic life his son may be said to have remained at his post with no less resolution.

James Thomson was trained to be an army school-master. At the age of eighteen, while quartered at Ballinacollig, in Cork, he fell in love with a young girl named Matilda Wella. After he had known her for two years she died; a calamity of which the full and bitter consciousness remained with Thomson for a quarter of a century. There is scarcely one of his poems that has not some allusion to this child, and in the end, when the awful history of his days was at last concluded, a lock of her hair was buried with him.

In Ireland, he also met Charles Bradlaugh who, having already got into trouble for his free-thinking views, had enlisted as a common trooper. When Bradlaugh was on sentry duty it was Thomson's custom to walk by his side, and one gets an interesting picture of these two men who were destined to become so famous, discoursing philosophy under the summer stars.

In 1862, Thomson was expelled from the service for a slight breach of military discipline. For the next five years he lived in London in the house of Charles Bradlaugh, earning his livelihood as best he could by office-work and journalism. This period was in all probability the happiest of his life. With his friend to satisfy his craving for companionship, and Hypatia and Alice Bradlaugh to satisfy his more sentimental affections, he would seem to have attained to some measure of contentment. In the evenings, he would tell stories to the children or sit smoking with their father, and on Sundays and holidays the whole party would often go out for excursions or perhaps walk together to the grave of Charles Lamb.

It was now that his poems began to appear in the *National Reformer*. Many of them are marred by that same tone of forced jocularity which spoils his letters. Now and again, however, they are excellent, as, for example, the one entitled "L'ancien Régime," the bitter, satirical quality of which is altogether characteristic of his temper.

Who has a thing to bring
For a gift to our Lord the King?
A harlot brought him her flesh,
Her lusts, and the manifold mesh
Of her wiles, interwoven with caprice;
Harlotry's just the thing
To bring as a gift for our King.

Thomson made at this time two expeditions out of England, one to America as the secretary to some min-

ing-corporation in Colorado, and one to Spain as a correspondent for the *New York World*. The latter enterprise proved a complete failure: sufficient copy was not forthcoming. Soon after his return a quarrel with Bradlaugh threw him once for all upon his own resources and he became for the rest of his life what is known as a "single-room bachelor" in the East End of London.

There were thousands and thousands of human kind
In this desert of brick and stone:
But some were deaf and some were blind,
And he was there alone.

Closed up in one small room, as it were in a cage, he dragged out the rest of his life, day by day.

The publication in 1874, of his masterpiece "The City of Dreadful Night," brought him into contact with several of the more discerning men of letters of the day. George Meredith, Philip Bourke Marston, W. M. Rossetti, Emerson and Longfellow all recognized its value. He sent copies of it to Thomas Carlyle and George Eliot, no comment, however, being evoked from the former old curmudgeon, though the ethical-minded novelist was considerate enough to write a letter to him in which she expressed the hope "that a mind informed with so much passionate energy would soon produce works with a wide embrace of human fellowship in them."

Slowly the dull years passed by with penury, disappointment and insomnia as his three constant companions. At certain periods he would endeavour to drown in alcohol the misery of his weary and jaded mind, but it was only to return to his sordid surroundings, after the bout was over, in a fit of even greater depression. That people could ever think of time as passing swiftly was to James Thomson incomprehensible—

This Time which crawleth like a monstrous snake
Wounded and slow and very venomous;

From his diaries we get a devastating insight into the dreariness of his life, into the agony that too often, alas! in this world besets an imaginative and sensitive nature submerged in commonplace surroundings. Day followed day in uneventful melancholy procession, and each was as like to each in its neutral tone as one dull English penny is to another. From his walks along the depressing streets of London, he would return to his lodging house, would open the dreary house-door and, passing through the tiny hall, smelling of to-day's cooking, yesterday's gas, and innumerable forgotten inmates, stumble up the dark stairway to be confronted at last by the same books, the same dirty and hateful litter that he had left so short a time before. It is no wonder that references to the weather play so important a part in these journals, references to the visibility or invisibility of sun or moon, those two free luminaries that moved above his head with so large and tranquil an assurance.

Bitter easterly. Some sun. Aftn. walk about Soho. (bought coal-scuttle; after three years!) Moon keen as crystal, sky pale and cloudless, stars few and dim, ground like iron, wind like a razor.

... Cold slight snow; fine morning, livid day. Snowing pretty heavily at night (9 p. m.). Picked just twenty-one sticks out of my grate, the rest being quite enough to light the fire.

Nov. 2nd, 1874. Forty years old to-day. Cold; third day of fog. Congenial natal weather.

It was at this time that James Thomson wrote that curious poem called "In the Room."

The afternoon has grown late and still the curtains of the apartment remain undrawn,

And nimble mice slept, wearied out
With such a double night's uproar;

At last in the silent dimness the very furniture becomes articulate! The mirror, the cupboard and finally the bed, speak!

I know when men are good or bad,
When well or ill, he slowly said;
When sad or glad, when sane or mad,
And when they sleep alive or dead.

The bed went on, 'This man who lies
Upon me now is stark and cold;
He will not any more arise,
And do the things he did of old.'

But envisage his release as he might in imaginative verse, James Thomson's life still dragged on, dragged on, with all the horrible tenacity of some wretched animal whose spine is broken and yet does not die. His insomnia grew worse, but still he survived,

Feeling the hands of the Infernal Powers
Heavy upon me for enormous ill.

In his ghastly poem to insomnia he describes with intolerable vividness, the nerve-tortured state of one to whose brain even the solace of sleep is denied; as if he alone, James Thomson, ex-army schoolmaster, had been selected by some incredible and malign causality to bear the burden of an immortal consciousness when all other men had rest.

I heard the sounding of the midnight hour;
The others one by one had left the room,
In certain assurance that the gracious power
Of sleep's fine alchemy would bless the gloom.

But I with infinite weariness outworn,
Haggard with endless nights unblessed by sleep,
Ravaged by thoughts unutterably forlorn,
Plunged in despair unfathomably deep,
Went cold and pale and trembling with affright
Into the desert vastitude of Night
Arid and wild and black.

How I got through I know not, faint as death;
And then I had to climb the awful scarp,

Perspiring with faint chills instead of heat,
Trembling, and bleeding hands and knees and feet;
Falling, to rise anew;
Until, with lamentable toil and travel
Upon the ridge of arid sand and gravel
I lay supine half-dead and heard the bells chime two.

Towards the end of his life he was occupied in writing certain literary essays, selecting, curiously enough, amongst other writers no less a subject than Walt Whitman, whose poetry at that time was little known in England. There is something extremely affecting in this appreciation of the great American avoucher written by the hand of the man who of all others was the most unhappy. Might it really have been possible, had the two ever met, that the great, life-giving, life-accepting heart of Walt Whitman would have had vigour enough in its ample aplomb to fortify and sustain the darkened spirit of the London poet? At any rate, one experiences a strange sensation, as of miraculous help arriving suddenly in a situation of desperate need, when one comes upon a quotation of this kind in an article by Thomson:

Let the physicians and priest go home
I seize the descending man, and raise him with resistless will.
O despairer, here is my neck:

By God! you shall not go down! Hang your whole weight upon me.

I dilate you with tremendous breath—I buoy you up;
Every room of the house I fill with armed force,
Lovers of me; bafflers of the graves.

It would be a mistake, however, to regard Thomson as a spiritual weakling. He was not that. Rather, like Dante's proud Italian, damned for ever in the blackest abyss of Hell, he raises his hand in blasphemous imprecation against Almighty God. "Take it God, for it is at thee that I aim it."

"The City of Dreadful Night" contains passages of extraordinary and appalling power. But, as James Thomson himself declared, its appeal is likely always to be limited.

If any care for the weak words here written,
It must be some one desolate, Fate-smitten,
Whose faith and hope are dead, and who would die.

The conception of the poem, with its sombre imagery, is terrific. The world in which we live is likened to a vast, doomed city which lifts its "mass enorm" in the centre of an arid desert. The city is enveloped in a dim penumbra through the nebulous light of which street-lights burn obscurely. "Amidst the sounding solitudes," "ranged mansions" overshadow everything, "still as tombs" where

Myriads of habitants are ever sleeping,
Or dead, or fled from nameless pestilence!

Along the darkened sidewalks of this tremendous and awful metropolis, James Thomson makes his way, following close upon another figure "because he seemed to walk with an intent."

As I came through the desert, thus it was,
As I came through the desert.

How the reiteration of those famous lines beats in upon the brain after a while, like the regular treading, appalling in its heavy monotony, of hostile feet on a pavement outside one's door:

As I came through the desert, thus it was
As I came through the desert . . .
But I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

In the resonant alleys along which they go they see

worn faces that look deaf and blind
Like tragic masks of stone. With weary tread,
Each wrapt in his own doom, they wander, wander,
Or sit foredone and desolately ponder
Through sleepless hours with heavy drooping head.

They glimpse a thousand evil things ominous and dreadful.

After a hundred steps I grew aware
Of something crawling in a lane below;
It seemed a wounded creature prostrate there
That sobbed with pangs in making progress slow,
The hind limbs stretched to push, the fore limbs then
To drag.

The thing looked up, and behold it was a man:

Long grey unrevered locks befouled with mire.
A haggard filthy face with bloodshot eyes,
An infamy for manhood to behold.

At last they draw near to a vast cathedral whose portentous sculptured mass, shadowed far up in the cold, limitless darkness of the night, overlooks a moonlit, cloistral lawn across the wide expanse of which dim crowds of wavering phantom citizens are hurrying. The two travellers enter with the throng, and there in the vast, hollow, many-aisled sanctuary, with tinted moonbeams slanting down through the high mullioned windows, they await the Preacher.

Suddenly a voice goes echoing through the vaulted tracery.

And I have searched the heights and depths, the scope
Of all our Universe, with desperate hope
To find some solace for your wild unrest,
And now at last authentic word I bring,
Witnessed by every dead and living thing;
Good tidings of great joy for you, for all:
There is no God; no Fiend with names divine
Made us and tortures us; if we must pine,
It is to satiate no Being's gall.

I find no hint throughout the Universe
Of good or ill, of blessing or of curse;
I find alone Necessity Supreme;
With infinite Mystery, abysmal dark,
Unlighted ever by the faintest spark
For us the flitting shadows of a dream.

The world rolls round for ever like a mill;
It grinds out death and life and good and ill
It has no purpose, heart or mind or will.

This little life is all we must endure,
The grave's most holy peace is ever sure,
We fall asleep and never wake again.

As the years passed, James Thomson's melancholy grew deeper and deeper. Dejected, poverty-stricken, unrecognized, he still tramped the streets, and still from his bed in his lodging house stared blankly into an ultimate void. In the beginning of the year 1882, something seems to have given way in him at last and, fully cognizant of what he was doing, he deliberately set about to drink himself to death. He was thrown out into the streets by his landlord. Again and again with a strange dogged determination he tried to force his way into the miserable abode which, after all, was the only home he knew. "I must have a roof over my head."

Four months passed by and he was still alive. It is known that he spent some part of the time in jail; for the rest, he drifted about in the purlieus of Wapping-Old-Stairs and The Isle of Dogs. Most of his friends lost sight of him. A few of them saw him at rare intervals, and always from his finely moulded head, furrowed now with deep lines, his blue eyes looked out with abject defiance. On one occasion he was seen in a tavern, dressed in mud-stained, ragged clothes. He was wearing a pair of carpet slippers through the broken soles of which his naked feet were clearly visible.

Then suddenly he appeared in the rooms of Philip Bourke Marston, the blind poet. Although Marston could not see his guest there was something about his wild speech that filled the blind man with terrible misgivings. Fortunately, William Sharp, the critic, happened to come in later in the afternoon. He found Thomson lying on Marston's bed, in a pool of blood, almost unconscious. He had the sick man conveyed to the London University Hospital where, it is said, he lay for a long time on the bare bench of the common waiting-room until the house physician found time to attend to him. What, exactly, were Thomson's last words has never been divulged. It has been hinted that they were such as to cause even his friends to look askance. "I shall get out of here on Monday, even if it's in my coffin" was one sentence shrieked out by the frenzied man who could not die. His words proved happily true. On the following Monday he, the atheist, theophobist, life-hater, found rest at last for his "homeless mind," in a good hour, under six feet of honest earth. No religious service was said over his grave. Free at length from

Infections of unutterable sadness,
Infections of incalculable madness,
Infections of incurable despair,

he was simply put under ground, "unhoused, unan-nal'd," cursed alike by man and God, a renegade and outcast who had been denied everything in the world except genius. LLEWELYN POWYS.

TAXATION OF LAND-VALUES.

I HAVE shown that a small portion of the rental value of land is secured for the community by means of the tax levied by all municipalities upon the market-value of the privilege of land-ownership, or, in other words, upon the so-called value of land. I have pointed out that this is a clumsy method of procedure and that it would be far better to replace these taxes on land-value by a direct rent-charge for the privilege of land-ownership, since the nature of the payment would then be unmistakable, and consequently the desirability of increasing it would be apparent. Nevertheless, it is probable that the increase which I have shown to be necessary in the amount of ground-rent to be taken by the community, will be most easily and quickly secured by an increase in the taxes on land-value, merely because that method of collecting ground-rent is already in practical use; and in fact a few localities have already begun to increase these taxes while simultaneously reducing taxes on buildings and on improvements upon land, and other taxes detrimental to industry.

If much is to be accomplished in this direction, however, it is certain that the public must be educated to understand that the tax on land-value is in truth a payment for a privilege, and is not a tax in the ordinary sense; that is, it is not a burden on the creative effort of mankind. That this is not so understood even by business men otherwise astute and intelligent, is clear if we consider the widely prevalent but mistaken belief among such men that all taxes, not excepting the tax on land-values, can be, and actually are, shifted to the consumer in the shape of increased prices, and must therefore necessarily restrict and hamper business.

The recent active campaign by business men for the adoption of a Federal sales-tax, which of course would restrict business and increase the cost of living, was clearly the result of the belief that all taxes must have these effects but that the sales-tax would be, perhaps, the least injurious. It is certainly inconceivable that the men behind this movement to increase prices to their own customers and thus to restrict their own business, could have had any understanding of the nature of the tax on land-value, or could have supposed otherwise than that taxes on land-value, like other taxes, would restrict business and would be shifted to the consumer. Yet clearly this can not be so, as the tax on land-value is but a payment for the privilege of exclusive possession of an opportunity, and is in amount, as I have shown in my last article, but a small proportion of the true rental value of that opportunity. It is because this payment for privilege is too small that valuable opportunities are withheld from use and industry is thereby restricted. To increase this payment, through an increase in the tax on land-value, will help to free industry; and therefore instead of raising the cost of living, it will lower it.

It would certainly be ridiculous to imagine that it could be detrimental to the interests of the community to require payment for a privilege conferred by the community. Suppose, for example, that some individual had acquired the right to draw annually a certain sum from the public treasury without rendering any service in return, and that this privilege were transferable.

Then, unquestionably, the privilege would sell in the open market at a premium and might be taxed as property; but how could such a tax in any way restrict industry or increase the cost of living? So also with the land-owning privilege; adequate payment for it merely safeguards the rights of the community and instead of discouraging industry, prevents the monopoly of its indispensable prerequisite.

To strengthen our conviction that this is true, let us take another aspect of the question; let us consider what results, under present conditions, must follow an increase of taxes on land-value. In every city and town of this country, there is land of very considerable value which is entirely unused and unimproved. In the big cities these values are stupendous, approximating in greater New York the huge sum of \$600 million. We are all aware that on such land there are "carrying charges" to be paid, in the shape of lost interest and taxes, and that these charges are to some extent a deterrent from holding land out of use for a long period of time. It ought, then, to be obvious that if, in spite of these charges, lands of great value are nevertheless held out of use, then to increase these charges by increasing the taxes on land-value would be to make the holders more inclined either to utilize their holdings or to dispose of them. The resulting competition among them for purchasers or tenants would cause them to offer their holdings for sale or for rent at lower prices than they had previously asked, to the great benefit of industry which could thus secure its prime necessity, land, at a reduced cost.

It is often said that taxes on real estate increase house-rents; but a little consideration will show the falsity of this notion. It is true that taxes on that part of real estate which consists of buildings are certain to discourage building and to increase house-rents, but taxes on the ground upon which buildings must be erected serve to bring vacant land into the market at lower prices and thus furnish better opportunities for building-purposes. Thus building is encouraged and house-rents are lowered.

It is an unfortunate fact that in most of our States it is either a Constitutional requirement or an apparently unbreakable custom to tax land and buildings at the same rate, and in consequence it is very generally imagined that the burden of taxation on real estate is too heavy and that other sources of revenue must be found. As a matter of fact it is not true that in any municipality of the United States, taxes on real estate as a whole are too heavy. The whole difficulty lies in the above-mentioned requirement of a uniform rate of taxation on all kinds of real estate, with the result that improved real estate is over-taxed, while unimproved real estate escapes with inadequate payment for the privilege its ownership represents.

For purposes of taxation, real estate should always be separated into its component parts; that is, land, on the one hand, and on the other, buildings and improvements upon the land. While the taxes on the former should be increased, those on the latter should be diminished. Actual results from such a policy may be seen in New York City and in Pittsburgh. In New York, the law exempting new buildings from taxation for a period of ten years, although grossly unjust to the owners of old buildings, is nevertheless furnishing an object lesson in the encouragement of building. In Pittsburgh also, where the assessment of buildings is gradually being reduced to fifty per cent of their value, while the assessment of land is maintained at 100 per cent, building has notably increased.

If, however, involuntary unemployment is to disappear, or, in other words, if restrictions upon the opportunity to produce are to be abolished and "the right to work" is to be firmly established, this policy must be carried much further and all taxes which penalize industry must be completely done away with; while the tax on land-value, which is the payment for the privilege of land-ownership, must be increased not only to the point of providing sufficient revenue for governmental purposes, but still further, if necessary to prevent the monopoly of the land and raw materials provided by nature for the use of all.

The industry of farming is basic, and upon its prosperity depends the prosperity of all industry. Yet our present blind system of collecting revenue bears upon it with especial heaviness. The value of farm-land per unit of area is very small as compared with the value of urban land. If, therefore, farmers were required to pay only for the privilege of land-ownership, the total of taxes collected from them would be much less than now. At present, every productive effort in farming is destructively taxed. Farmers have but little property which they can conceal, while every cent spent in adding to the productiveness of their farms comes promptly under the eyes of the assessors. Everything done to increase fertility—that is, clearing, draining, irrigating and fertilizing—is promptly assessed and taxed, as are also all buildings and improvements of buildings, rolling stock and live stock. Nothing escapes the destroying hand of the Government. To make matters worse, it is a common practice to assess unused farm-land at much less than its true value. Thus the most important industry of the nation carries a staggering and wholly unnecessary burden imposed by the Government, while at the same time encouragement is given to the practice of monopolizing its opportunities. The results of this policy are what might be expected: huge areas of valuable agricultural land are held out of use; at times speculation is rampant; and tenant-farming is steadily on the increase.

If we seek the industrial salvation of our nation, we must require full payment for privilege and must stop penalizing industry. JOHN S. CODMAN.

(A seventh article by Mr. Codman will appear in next week's issue.)

HOW IT LOOKS—IN FRANCE.

ALTHOUGH it is the summer holiday and the church bells have rung out in celebration, it will be a day of curious irony here in Paris. It is raining again and rather cold and gloomy, and as one walks down the street one hears everybody speak feelingly of the wretched weather, as I suppose people have done and will do on the first and last days. Over my *café crème* and *petit pain*, huddled within an overcoat at a sidewalk-table, I stare at the two big events of the hour spread across the pages of every newspaper—the death of Lord Northcliffe and the rupture with England. It is odd that they should both have come on the same day! Yet both events had been expected for the last fortnight, and it is not inappropriate that they should have taken place at the same time. Northcliffe's steady post-armistice Francophilism, which had done so much to encourage and delude the chauvinists here, was gone; yes, after all, there was something fitting that the break in the Entente should come on the very day of Northcliffe's death.

There can be no doubt that the Entente has vanished, as it was bound to vanish when the Versailles treaty was signed with sentimental regard for mean political passions and no regard whatever for economic realities. No great gift of prophecy was required then to predict what has now come to pass; just as there were, I suppose

many before the last war who saw quite clearly its inevitable approach. I remember that only last evening I read a pitiful editorial in the *Temps*, in which it was argued that France would not be left "alone" even if England took another path—were not Rumania and Poland and Czechoslovakia on France's side? I said to myself then, "*Ca y est!* When the Quai d'Orsay advances this seriously, it is ready to take the plunge of isolated action." But now that it has happened, it is hard really to believe it. My mind goes back to another day of August, eight years ago, when I was also in Paris and saw the mobilization-order posted up on the walls of a post office, and read that most ironical of all demands upon the citizens, "Remember, mobilization is not war." I recall that they shook their heads, and said simply, "*Ca y est.*"

What will *l'Humanité* have to say—the paper which by its campaign against "l'homme qui rit" actually brought on a discussion of the responsibility for the war in the Chamber of Deputies? I turn to it, and the first words are "*C'est la rupture.*" I read on: "Yesterday witnessed the most important event which has taken place in the world since the armistice. The Bloc National, the Royalist clique, and the Government of M. Poincaré, tightly welded to each other, obtained their success. And what a success it is! There are new wars on the horizon, or rather there is a new universal conflagration. The responsibility—we know to whom it belongs; it is established: future history will not hesitate." That is frank enough, yet it is partisan, as all French papers are partisan, and I can fancy that the anger of the English press this morning—and it has been getting angrier all during the last week, as has the French press—will echo these sentiments. If Northcliffe could only have lived to see this day and to write one more editorial! How he would flay the contentions of *l'Humanité* and berate Lloyd George for his clumsiness!

Perhaps it is just as well that he is not here to write that editorial. For it would be proof positive that he had lost touch with his own countrymen. Mr. Lloyd George knew the temper of the English public when he said, "We agree to disagree." He has all of Great Britain behind him, and he knows it; and *l'Humanité* to the contrary notwithstanding, M. Poincaré has all France behind him. What does *l'Euvre*, one of the few liberal papers here, say in its "*manchette*"? "*M. Lloyd George a réussi à refaire une France unanime.*" Then, since it can not forget its suspicions of the Premier, it adds: "*Souhaitons que M. Poincaré n'en abuse pas.*" But it is the first line which is the spontaneous expression of French emotion.

The French are angry and feel cheated. They did not like Lloyd George's running off for the sacrosanct week-end. They did not like Lloyd George's teaching M. Briand golf. They do not like Lloyd George at all—and neither do I. He signed a contract with them—he was all for it at the time—and now he wants to renege. The French are logical to the point of absurdity; they hate compromises; and they have a long memory. Also—here we have the nub of the thing—they have no unemployment-problem to trouble them.

For it can not be too much emphasized, it seems to me, that the basic reason for the present conflict, always latent in England, is simply this: England is not self-sufficient: it is a modern, industrial country to which foreign trade is the breath of life. France is a self-sufficient, in some ways almost mediæval, agricultural country. England can not see Germany destroyed as a market. To France, save as a rallying point for her fears, Germany means nothing but a possible field from which money may be collected. Whether or not the new sanctions will yield anything does not concern the French particularly; they are willing to try anything once—when it is Germany that is being experimented upon. For unless France gets money somewhere she runs the risk of bankruptcy. I do not mean money to pay her external debts, but her debts to her own citizens. If the sons

of the Republic suddenly find the bonds in their stockings worth about two sous to the franc, or even less, what will the poor politicians do then, poor things? They want to hold their jobs. They do not dare tax the peasantry too heavily. They do not dare tell the truth that Germany can not pay, for they have been saying the precise opposite for four years. Consequently they are practically forced to go on and on.

The prospect rather exhilarates me, though it may be hell for Germany for a while, especially for Germans in Alsace and Lorraine. But in the long run I believe it is better to go through with the thing to its logical—and absurd—conclusion. Enforcing sanctions, isolated action, will bring in no money, and I believe that the shrewder heads at the Quai d'Orsay know that perfectly well. But they can not let go of the tiger's tail of their own eight years of propaganda. When the truth must be faced, when the politicians have exhausted all tricks, and the people of France realize that they have got nothing and have allowed themselves to be practically isolated from the world, as Germany permitted herself to be in 1914, the results may be surprising. The French habit of holding on to an idea until it is thoroughly disproved has its encouraging side: they then get a new idea. When that happens I shall be congratulating myself that I have nothing personally to do with politics.

British liberal protest for the last few months has had an unpleasant holier-than-thou flavour, to which I for one prefer the sincere imbecilities of M. Daudet. England, as usual, is making a moral issue out of her necessities, and I suppose that she is capturing American opinion into the bargain. France does not any longer pretend to be moral in her external politics. She is faced with bankruptcy and sees no help for it but to take a chance. It is as neat as a geometrical proposition.

Meanwhile, I can see no reason why we should feel it incumbent upon us to read France moral lectures. If we had made one really sensible step towards the solution of the reparations-mess and the inter-allied war-loan mess, we should have the right to talk. We have not even gone so far as England and suggested cancellation of war-debts. We stand on our legal rights, saying with unction that France must be "reasonable" and reduce Germany's bill, and at the same time sending sharp notes to Paris on the necessity of making some arrangements for interest-payments on France's loan from us.

The whole problem of Europe would be different, if France were not a self-supporting country. If France, like Germany, or Italy, or England, were certain to starve to death without foreign trade, the politicians would not be worrying about how to balance their mythical budget, but about how to get industry going so that unemployment would stop. Since there is no immediate urgency on this score, the basic reason for the French action is a financial one. It is impossible to exaggerate the disappointment and sense of frustration which the French felt when the international bankers' conference here came to nothing. Like most Americans of radical stripe, I appreciated to the full the irony and the tartness of the statement given out by the bankers in explanation of their conclusion that the time was "inopportune" for a loan to Germany. But the problem went deeper than the mere obstinacy of the French in not fixing a definite sum for reparations. The bankers were a non-governmental body; they reproached a political body, the French Administration. Until the United States Government itself takes a definite position on which the French Government, as a political body, can reckon, the French Government, of political necessity, must keep the reparations-question up in the air. In other words, although Europe's trouble is really at bottom a financial fear on the part of France, the relationship between this fear and the political actions of America is very close. Peaceful, prosperous America, putting up tariffs at home, refusing to consider the possibility of cancelling the debt, taking no definite attitude one way or the other towards German reparations, except to hold rather grudgingly

to its phantasmagoric "rights"—from such a nation Mr. Morgan arrives in a country suffering from war-neurosis and facing bankruptcy, and expects to find in *its* Government all the virtues which are lacking in his own.

It might be funny; but I am an American, and, therefore it is rather sad. We have had so many opportunities since 1914, and we have thrown them all away. Now again we have an opportunity to save Europe from going completely to the devil. But we shall not take it, of course. Perhaps in the end it will be just as well. Everywhere east of the Rhine, Governments are held in the contempt they deserve. That emotion seems on the point of travelling a little further westward. Perhaps some day it will jump the Atlantic. Meanwhile the prospects here are not very good—except that some more people are going to learn a little wisdom, although at an uncommonly high price.

HAROLD E. STEARNS.

AJAX, SON OF TELAMON.

No great literary artist of antiquity—not Homer himself—was ever more loving than Sophocles in the labour of delineating his Ajax. Homer allowed himself two heroes of the name, but to Sophocles there was in reality only one Ajax. A marble heart might bleed for the most constructive genius among the Greek tragic writers, as one advertising-campaign after another associates the name of his doughtiest hero with playing-cards, safety-matches, rubber shields and blast furnaces. Perhaps the publicity-hounds, as the press agents are now called, remain in ignorance of the confusion they create between that Ajax who defied the lightning and that nobler Ajax who fought so valiantly with Hector and became in time the darling of the Athenian stage. It is with this embodiment of the perfect gentleman of antiquity that Sophocles concerns himself, in a mood very different from that of Æschylus, not because Sophocles is making a study of character, to put it explicitly, but because he is making a study of death.

That point must be made peremptorily because it explains the immediate importance of the Ajax who was so precious to Sophocles, the great Ajax who lost the contest over the armour of Achilles, the Ajax who was no politician like Odysseus—Ajax of the great heart, of the hot temper, of the generous soul, of the sanguinary impulses! He was a blend of two individuals, not a Jekyll and Hyde, but a Doctor Johnson and an Earl of Chesterfield, or any other combination of decent characters in flat antithesis.

Grotesquely as this Ajax is misrepresented in French light opera, he is rendered unintelligible if not positively meaningless by those Continental Europeans who live so pretentiously on the intellectual plane by teaching Greek as it was taught in the eighteenth century, to Anglo-American educators who will want a "degree" when they get home. The truth about Ajax will never be acquired by anyone at a university, for an establishment of that sort is no longer organized with special reference to his type. The truth about Ajax is simply that he was a perfect gentleman, like Pericles, like Saint Patrick, like Athos, like the late Cornelius Vanderbilt (not the Commodore). Ajax was not, indeed, so beautiful as Achilles—who ever was?—but Achilles was not so well-bred as Ajax. If Ajax lacked the guile of Odysseus, neither could Odysseus make Hector tremble. Ajax was literally head and shoulders above all the other Greeks who went to Troy, but in that chastity of honour of which Burke speaks, Ajax rose from among them as a mountain towers above the little hills at its foot. There was in Ajax something of the glorious savagery of our Theodore Roosevelt and a very sufficient dash of the piety of Stonewall Jackson. How Ajax could pray, especially to beautiful goddesses, and how absorbed beautiful goddesses became in keeping him out of mischief! There were times when he seemed to have all Olympus turned upside down with his escapades around Troy.

A source of embarrassment to Ajax was the fact that everybody at the siege of Troy wanted to see him fight. Then there was the detail, quite apart from his unimpeachable social standing, of his popularity with the mob. The uniqueness of Ajax resided in his combination of whatever was elegant and distinguished in Beau Brummell with the brawn and rush of the late John L. Sullivan; and when all that is said, there was more to him than even this. He had a spiritualized thought. Had he lived in our own age, the discriminating would have said in their character-sketches of Ajax that his was the genius of personality combined with the humility of all who practice what Brother Lawrence called "the presence of God."

When Sophocles assumed his serene sway over the Attic theatre, he found this Ajax supreme over the Greek imagination. Achilles seemed at times out of the picture entirely. Great as were the glories of Alcibiades, and many as were his infamies, his redeeming trait in the eyes of most Athenians was his descent from this Ajax, son of Telamon; Ajax who came to Troy with those twelve ships. The painters, the sculptors and the poets suffered from the same sort of craze for the very name of Ajax, as that of the contemporary purveyors of chewing-gum and little cigars.

The great tragedians of antiquity, being Greek, divined that inexplicable quality in Ajax which can never die, even at the command of modern science, that eternal flash of youth, the swiftness and the efficiency of the lightning. A tragedy consecrated to Ajax would accordingly be a serious proposition even to Sophocles, with the prestige of prizes already won, but the ordeal was all the riskier because the theme was death. It is this theme which renders the whole problem of the Ajax of Sophocles so instant, so relevant, for the conception of death ascribed to his hero by the tragic writer must shake the faith of the greatest twentieth-century journalist in his own modernity.

The temper of Ajax being in all crises one of excitement, his whole soul being incorrigibly romantic, he becomes a trifle too subdued and therefore unfamiliar to us under the influence of the grand, self-possessed, classical Sophoclean manner. Ajax at first does not fit in with the Homeric conception of him, because the Sophoclean picture is one of despair and doom and death, and the hero naturally is all life and hope and joy. The fine gentleman is dishevelled from the first moment of the tragedy, making us think, at times, of Hamlet with his stockings fouled, his doublet all unbraced.

An art less dominant than that of Sophocles must have collapsed at the opening scene from the mere effort to get any such impression of Ajax across to the Athenian mind. Sophocles turns the trick, as we inelegant moderns say, by keeping his Ajax ever in the shadow of death, but Sophocles is too austere an artist to bring death on the scene with robe and sword, as in the poetically pretty personification of Euripides. Sophocles is concerned with death as an idea. Hence that black night of Hades must brood over Ajax from the moment when the wily Odysseus follows those fatal footprints to the right tent. Caught with the goods on him! The great detective who unravelled this mystery of the slaughtered cattle had the aid of a goddess in following up the right clue.

Ajax is a man of thought as well as of action and he is not long in making up his mind to die. The audience realized that he must come to this conclusion long before he actually saw that he must quit this Trojan scene, his ships, the woman he loves. It is with the quality of this death he hurries to meet—Ajax is too much of a gentleman to keep death waiting—that the tragedy is really concerned. It is difficult for the modern mind, trained in that physiological conception of death which we owe to medical science, to appreciate the very casual aspect it assumes in the experience of Ajax.

He takes so much for granted on the subject of death—his conclusions suggest careful study of the writings of

Camille Flammarion—his preparations are so like what we might expect in the same emergency from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle or Sir Oliver Lodge! When he has quitted these plains of Troy for ever, Ajax knows so uncannily that he will remain afterwards precisely what he was before—that is, in consciousness. He will feel quite himself among those who have preceded him to Hades. He will be wiser than he was when he had that fight with Hector. He will have passed through a tremendous initiation into a finer company than he has yet known. He will be enlarged, enriched spiritually. He goes from our world to the next in the spirit of the traveller taking a coach between two towns. He will not forget the station from which he took his departure, for he will be at times too interested a spectator of the earthly scene. He will be joined by those he left behind him, when their hour has struck.

Had his command over the resources of the Greek language been less or had he explored the Hellenic mind with a thought unbalanced between things spiritual and things material, Sophocles could not have delighted Athenian audiences by displaying his constructive genius in this dark medium. We are in the twilight of the theme when the tragedian deals with the agony of Ajax after that fit of madness. Odysseus had won the armour of Achilles. It was more than an Ajax could endure. He lost his reason. The incredible delicacy of the slow approach of Sophocles to his theme leaves us in ignorance of the precise doom reserved for Ajax until long after the hero has come to himself, until long after he has slaughtered the cattle under the impression that they were the men he hated. At last he sees that he must leave his cadaver behind him as the locust abandons the shell from which it emerges on a tree trunk and flies into the air. It would be altogether perverse, in view of the Greek conception of death, to conceive of Ajax as a suicide in our sense. Nevertheless, the conception of death in the mind of Ajax and the conception of death now freshly emerging in this century of ours are exactly alike. The whole tribe of us—psychical researchers, psycho-analysts, Christian Scientists, Anglican bishops, students of the Bible—have returned with Sophocles to the conception of death which led Ajax to the swift use he made of Hector's sword. The spiritual background of Greek tragedy is the spiritual background against which stand the figures of the great explorers of the world that seems to exist on the other side of the ocean of human experience. Ajax thought in terms that parallel the conceptions of the members of the society for psychical research, in London. Ajax held with them that the survival of human personality after physical death is a fact. It is the conception upon which Sophocles has based his masterpiece. All this is beyond the professors.

The ideas thus transmitted from the mind of Sophocles to the Athenian audiences who crowded to see his Ajax, have been gleaned quite recently from the Bible itself, apparently. At any rate, the gifted Bishop Winnington-Ingram informs us that definite details of life after death are deducible from the scriptures. "The first is that the man is the same man." Five minutes after he dies he remains the individual he was five minutes before he died. His character grows after death. "There is progress," says this gifted Bishop. He has memory, this man who went from our world to the next. "Son, remember!"—that, observes the Bishop, is what was said to Dives there. "We shall remember everything after death." We shall recognize one another; and those over there will take an interest in those who are still there. It is all the eschatology of Ajax as dramatized by a Greek tragedian for a critical and orthodox public in an age that tolerated no trifling with religion, in a community that sent Socrates to death for his impiety.

This Sophoclean theory of death is confirmed as the soundest inference from all psychical research by that cautious student, Mr. J. Arthur Hill, whose critical investigations of telepathy, hypnotism, clairvoyance and miracles have been carried to the very border line between

two worlds. The death of which the Greek tragedians knew so much is supported in the minor as well as the major writings of Mrs. Eddy. It is upheld in the manuscripts of Quimby. Not one of the great masters of the spiritual life, from Thomas Aquinas to Swedenborg, can be cited in contradiction of its validity. It is this very attitude towards death in the Ajax of Sophocles that accounts for the overwhelming sense of reality with which one gasps from scene to scene. The dramatist convinces one that somewhere, somehow, all this really happened. Sophocles is not alone among the Greek tragedians in displaying this power over illusion. It is the power vitalizing Greek tragedy from century to century. No doubt something precious in the quality of the illusion is lost in what, for the sake of being polite, we must still call the "translations," but much of it gets by even Doctor Dryasdust and the college professors.

Thus Sophocles subdues death to the purposes of his Ajax in a fashion that makes it convincing after all these Christian centuries. This is the very death of which Paul spoke when he defined it as the last enemy that shall be overcome, it is the death from which Jesus raised the widow's son at Nain; not the death of the doctor's certificate but the death over which the resurrection was a final triumph.

ALEXANDER HARVEY.

THE RUSSIAN THEATRE.

THE chief significance of the Russian theatre at present lies in the fact that it has ceased to be a commercial "show business" and has become a national enterprise. One can not in a brief sketch outline the history of the Russian stage; but it is well known that men like Stanislavsky, Danchenko, and Tairov were developing a genuine art-theatre while we were still applauding "Secret Service" and regarding "The Great Divide" as a work of art. One can only jot down a few of one's impressions of the Russian theatre. The first is that a production of a new piece at the Bolshoi or the Art Theatre is an important event because it is the result of long and thorough preparation, and because it is a costly experiment. Such preparation is possible only when actors are paid in full during the period of rehearsal and when the State supports and subsidizes the theatre. The second impression is that the ballet is a typically Russian institution, the like of which exists in no other country; because the youth of Moscow, in its ambition to join the ballet, is filled with the desire not to enjoy the emoluments of the chorus girl, but to become artists. Finally there is the attitude of the audience; the difference between the attitude of the audiences in Moscow towards the play and players, and that of New York audiences, is the difference between respect and curiosity. It is small wonder that all the actors who fled from Moscow during the Revolution, like Kichalov, are returning. In the case of a man like Stanislavsky, the respect for the stage rises to general reverence.

Armed with Kenneth Macgowan's prettily illustrated book, "The Theatre of To-morrow," I visited Stanislavsky. After a short chat with him at the theatre, I was invited to his studio on the Leontievsky Pereulok, to watch him rehearse a new star in "Eugene Onegin." In this studio, formerly an old palace, a stage has been improvised between two pillars, a system of dimmers arranged in connexion with ordinary electric lights, a piano provided, and here, in this simple yet almost complete studio-theatre, take place all of Stanislavsky's important rehearsals. On the particular evening that I called, the Tsar of the theatre—as they call him—sat like a shaggy grey lion opposite the stage, listening to the new singer. About him were the other actors and managers, silently observing the effect on their leader. Not a single word was spoken. The rehearsal over, Stanislavsky thanked the actors and invited me to tea in his apartment. We passed the young singer—she was in the arms of a friend and was crying with excitement. She had been under a far greater strain than would await

her on the opening night; with such respect and fear do both artists and audience regard this creator of the Russian stage-movement.

At the Bolshoi the Imperial eagle has disappeared from the Tsar's box. During the performance of "Snegorouchka" the box, which is officially assigned to members of the All-Russian Soviet, was packed to overflowing. Undoubtedly some provincial delegation was in Moscow, for headed by Kalinin—the so-called Peasant-President—the delegates, both men and women, were crowded into the large box. The expression of awe on their faces is novel to the experience of the American theatre-goer. Not a word was uttered; there was not a movement which might disturb the performance.

In the opposite box, which is assigned to the Moscow Soviet, Kamenev, Litvinov, and some foreign guests quietly and respectfully followed the long performance until its very end, at one o'clock in the morning. During an exquisite production of "Kniaz Igor," Karachan, the Acting Commissar of Foreign Affairs, sat until the end of the performance. Russian officials would consider it an affront to the players to leave before the end of the play unless unavoidably obliged to do so. Yet the Government is constantly being criticized by the actors and complained of by the managers. Isadora Duncan, who is operating a dancing-school in Moscow, complained, when I met her in the Foreign Office, that the Government had failed to supply her school with heat and food. Artists have never been known to be good students of politics or economics, and if one tried to convince the actors and directors in Moscow that their Government is doing more to help them than any other Government would do under the same circumstances, one would be undertaking the impossible. Yet the Government is actually doing more to promote the interests of the theatre than could reasonably be expected in the present state of affairs.

I was enabled to appreciate this spirit of co-operation on the part of the authorities when I saw what we would term a "gala" production given at the Bolshoi. It was a benefit performance in honour of Karl Feodorovitch Valz, commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of his services at the Great Theatre. At the age of sixteen, this master mechanic had entered the theatre as a machinist's helper and was still actively directing his department. The bill for this unusual event was appropriately impressive. There was an overture to "Ruslan and Ludmilla" given by the entire orchestra of the Bolshoi. Following that was an act contributed by the (Chudozhestvenny) Art Theatre from the comedy "Every Wise Man has his Simplicities," Stanislavsky himself playing the lead. This was followed by the death act from "Eugene Onegin" under the direction of Stanislavsky, after which the company of the Maly Theatre contributed a "thriller" taken from the Georgian. Thereafter appeared one of the mechanical master creations of Valz himself—an act from the opera "The Corsair," in which a ship sinks to the bottom of the ocean. This mechanical feat was succeeded by a ballet, given by the dancers of the Bolshoi, headed by such stars as Kandaurova and Abramova. One may well doubt that there was ever such stage-talent gathered anywhere to pay homage to a master mechanic.

Subsequently the evening was devoted to orations. The audience on this particular evening was indeed a Revolutionary one as audiences go. In the orchestra sat side by side men and women in evening attire and in overalls. Between them were dapper young Red army officers and shabby militiamen. There was not a single vacant seat.

The speech-making was inaugurated by Lunatcharsky, the People's Commissar of Education, who had risen from a sick bed in order to congratulate Valz. For almost two full hours there were speeches by representatives of the various departments of the Bolshoi Theatre. The number of these representatives impressed one with the fact that the Bolshoi is a great and expensive enterprise: there were representatives of the male chorus, female chorus, ballet, ballet school, carpenters' depart-

ment, electrical department, scenic department, dramatic school, mechanical department, business office, directing office, orchestra, costumes, and others. One was further impressed by the length of time each representative had been with the institution, which was in no case less than ten and was sometimes as long as sixty years.

In Russia there have been two revolutions, civil war, invasion, blockade and famine, but every night the curtain at the Bolshoi was rung up whether the Tsar, Kerensky, or Lenin sat in the Kremlin. In these days, when currency in Russia is in an absurd condition of fluctuation, the box-office receipts of one week are often barely sufficient to support a day's expense during the following week. Subsidy is essential, or the doors of the theatre must close. The Government has been supporting the playhouses to an extent that has caused it to be frequently criticized by those who consider the theatre, in view of the famine, as a luxury—and still the actors complain.

At the Kamerny Theatre, which is one of the most unique in the world, Director Tairov explained that although the Government permitted them to advance their box-office prices every ten days, their deficit kept jumping ahead so fast that they were unable to buy even the barest essentials. At the same time, the Kamerny is in a better condition than other theatres, principally because of the simplicity of its production. A source of complaint is the inability to produce new plays because of the lack of money to finance them. The smaller Studio Theatres and the Kamerny can, however, with some difficulty, occasionally mount a new piece.

New productions are very rare at either the Art Theatre or the Bolshoi—which two houses, with the Kamerny, are the leaders of the Russian theatre-movement. The Bolshoi is playing its large repertoire of operas, with its incomparable ballet, while Stanislavsky's Art Theatre confines itself to such well-known pieces as "The Blue Bird," "Tsar Feodor," "The Cherry Orchard." The scenery is becoming worn in places. It is often impossible to get material to make proper alterations and repairs. True, the theatre suffers, but it suffers less than it would under like circumstances in any other country; an artist, however, can not and will not understand that. To appreciate the extent of governmental and semi-governmental enthusiasm for the stage, one need only see the series of books which the lawyer-publisher Brodsky is getting out in Petrograd. These are illustrated *de luxe* editions containing the stories of the productions of the Art Theatre. The publication of these volumes was begun in 1918, that is, during the Revolution. The series is expected to be completed next fall when the Art Theatre will celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary. "We shall then," said Stanislavsky's technical director, Dr. Rumiantsev, "go out into the world with this slogan: 'The only theatre which for twenty-five years never had an empty seat.'"

The theatre has thrust its roots into the national life of the Russian people; it is a truly national institution. "If they would only give us a chance," said one of the men at the Commissariat of Education, "we would send our men to Europe and America to study and to gather material. We would build a theatre-movement such as the world has not yet seen."

One can quite believe that, for, in spite of the wretched conditions under which they are working, the Russians are still the greatest actors, dancers, and scenic artists in the world.

CHARLES RECHT.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

OUR ARIELS.

SIRS: I feel quite distressed by Mr. Mulder's rationalization of Pearl, Hester Prynne's elf-child, in his article which appeared in your issue of 9 August. I read "The Scarlet Letter" when still quite young and have not re-read it. But Pearl lives in my memory, not as a thing of flesh and blood, but as the tiny incarnation of her mother's suppressed consciousness—a form that reflects not only her wayward impulses and her dumb

sorrow, but all the grace and the spirituality which would have been hers in a genial and gracious environment. Instead of being a concession to the Puritan ideal, I take Pearl to be a protest against it.

If Mr. Mulder insists upon realism, let me remind him that there are children and children. The majority, of course, would conform to his pattern. But the rare child, susceptible to the influences of sights and words which it can not yet comprehend, is by no means an unusual phenomenon. Born and reared as Pearl was, in a seclusion permeated with the moods of her mother and the minister, it is more natural than not that the habitual actions and expressions of these companions should have been to her a source of constant interest and bewilderment. In truth, we rarely allow for the subtlety of the perceptions of children, for the essential spirituality of their consciousness and for the intellectual activity which goes on in their minds.

As an example of quick perception in a seven-year-old, I can give the following: A child of that age asked me, "Who was Eve's mamma?" Instead of admitting at once that I did not know, I attempted an explanation and found myself confronted with another question even less answerable than the first. Then seven-years pointed the finger of scorn at me, literally. "Now you're in trouble," she said. "You answer one question and you get yourself into trouble." Could a trained psychologist have summed up the situation more accurately? But such perceptions can only be the result of long and quiet observation.

Children like these are our Ariels; and may nurses and psychologists and rationalists let them alone. I am, etc.,
E. S. H.

A BLUE VIEW OF THE STRIKE.

SIRS: It is extremely difficult to understand just what Mr. Richard B. Gregg is driving at in his letter concerning the railway-strike, which appeared in your issue of 9 August. "The strike came," says Mr. Gregg, "after a year of great depression and hardship, after months of severe and widespread unemployment, after drastic wage-cuts in every industry, and defeats of labour in every country." It would be utterly impossible to conceive of anything more heartless and cruel than the attitude which such a statement implies. After having bamboozled and humbugged these confiding railway-workers for years, their leaders induced them to strike at a time when everything portends disastrous defeat. Under the most favourable circumstances, strikers are always at a tremendous disadvantage, for the reason that their regular wages are barely enough to supply themselves and their families with the physical necessities of existence. When their wages stop, starvation is not far away, and it is upon this that their oppressors rely. When the strikers' children cry for food the strike is broken; they must surrender unconditionally. No matter how long the strike may last, the children of the railway-executives will not cry for food, in fact they will not miss a single meal. This is equally true of the children of the labour-leaders. But the children of the men who do the work, render the service, create the wealth, earn the dividends of the railway-executives and pay the princely salaries of the labour-leaders must face starvation if their fathers are idle a few weeks.

It would be laughable were it not so tragic, to listen to Mr. Gregg's boast that "the success of the strike has taken the railway-executives entirely by surprise." What success does Mr. Gregg mean? What success have the strikers so far met with? From present indications, is there the slightest warrant for believing that they will meet with any substantial success? Is it within the bounds of possibility that the railway-executives and the faithless labour-leaders will permit the strike to be a success? The truth is, and from this truth there is no possible escape, that there can be no improvement in the condition of wage-earners until Gompersism is overthrown and they use their political power to adjust laws and institutions to meet the demands of industrial and economic progress and to make the human order conform in as far as possible to the natural or divine order. I am, etc.,

Washington, D. C.

THOMAS F. MONAHAN.

A REMARKABLE ANALOGY!

SIRS: My attention has been called to the amusing jibes of a newspaper correspondent, quoted in an editorial note in a recent issue of the *Freeman*, aimed at my plan for stabilizing the dollar. This correspondent, as a *reductio ad absurdum*, suggested that we might as well stabilize the weather by "adding to or taking from the amount of mercury in the standard thermometer."

Your readers may like to compare this caricature of my plan with the real analogy involved. It apparently did not occur to the correspondent whom you quoted that there is already a

device which can and does "stabilize the weather" inside of a building. It is called a "thermostat." In fact, one form of thermostat recently invented will usually keep the temperature of a hospital uniform within a small fraction of a degree.

The principle of the thermostat is not to add to or take from the mercury but to add to or take from the *supply of heat* on the basis of the mercury reading as an *index* of what is required.

Similarly my plan for stabilizing the purchasing-power of the dollar is not to add to or subtract from that purchasing-power "by Government proclamation" but to add to or take from the gold in the dollar according to the readings of the index number of prices.

This correspondent illustrates the truth of Roger Babson's statement that only those who do not understand this plan oppose it. The same mail which brings his comments poking fun at this proposal brings another article from the Boston *Herald*, commending the plan and pointing out its difference from such inflationistic proposals as the writer believes Edison's and Ford's monetary proposals to be.

In further correction of this correspondent, I would like to point out that the Stable Money League, through its Research Council (of which I am not a member), is making a study of all stabilization-plans and is *not* as yet committed to mine or any other. Stable Money Leagues have also been begun in France, Italy, Germany, etc., because, as Ex-Vice-President Marshall has said, "Next to the problem of peace there is no more important problem before the world to-day than stabilization of money." The problem was brought up at Genoa and a proposal for its solution approved. This Genoa proposal originated in England, where already three million labourers have their wages adjusted by an index number—a clear recognition of the instability of money.

If this correspondent or any one else has a better monetary thermostat to propose than mine, we shall all welcome the opportunity to examine its construction. I am, etc.,

New Haven, Connecticut.

IRVING FISHER.

CONFUSING THOUGHT WITH FEELING.

SIRS: When I see the Republicans demanding a high tariff, notwithstanding the fact that if foreigners can not pay for our goods with their goods they can only give us more worthless promises to pay, which we already have in the sum of about a dozen billion dollars, I ask myself, "What is it that causes people to do that which in the light of reason is so absurd?" I have decided that the cause of the clamour for a high tariff is an intensive emotionalism among Republicans, resulting in their confusing the categories: that is, the Republicans no longer consider money to be merely a representation of goods used as a means of exchange but consider it to be a thing valuable in itself. Let me illustrate.

One night when walking in the outskirts of New Orleans I came upon a Negro revival-meeting. For a while I stood watching and listening to the audience, who were shouting and swaying as if insane; then I turned to the preacher, who was preaching in the sing-song manner of the Hard-shell Baptists. I tried to discover what he preached; only to discover that he preached nothing. He made no assertions; that is, he did not use nouns and verbs so as to form declarative sentences conveying thought, but used words for their own sake. Yet the emotion of his hearers was so intense that they were spellbound. Whenever that Negro revivalist used the words "heaven," "day of salvation," "River of Jordan" and the like, those Negroes, especially the women, would shout "Amen," "Hallelujah" and "Glory to God"; and whenever he used the words "hell," "Satan," "the damned" and the like, they would groan or rather grunt, "Uh! uh! uh!" as if they were lifting a heavy load.

It seems to me that the Republican and the protectionist are very much like these people. When talking of commerce, the protectionist thinks not of commodities or goods but uses words for their own sake. Yet the emotion of the Republicans is so intense that they too are spellbound. Whenever the protectionist uses the words "favourable balance," "American standard of living," "more work," "protection" and the like, the Republicans call him a statesman and saviour of the country; and whenever he uses the words "pauper-labour," "starvation," "foreign competition" and the like they shudder as if they beheld dead men. Clearly, there is no reasoning with them, for they are indulging not in thought but in emotion.

We can not continue to sell goods abroad unless we buy goods from abroad. Accordingly, there are workers in America who now suffer and will suffer because they have produced too much, that is, more than can be sold under protectionism. But even if we could continue to sell yearly a few billion dollars' worth of goods more than we buy,

would we not be a nation of fools to do that? As I am not an emotionalist, I am not comforted by the words "favourable balance." I think of what they mean, and only hope that the foreigners who receive our goods without sending us any in return are grateful to us, as those goods have cost us a great deal of hard work.

Doubtless, just as those hysterical Negresses would have denounced anyone who contended that they confused words and thought, so these emotional Republicans would denounce me for objecting that they confuse money and goods: they would probably call me a soulless materialist who values goods only. Against them I say nothing; but these protectionists who are putting through the Fordney-McCumber tariff-bill deserves to be shot down in a war to collect uncollectible debts. I am, etc.,

CHARLES SMITH.

BOOKS.

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.

THE eternal feminine in history is really the infernal feminine; and, if she is not infernal from the point of view of the Tories in ethics, commentators spend much time and patience in trying to prove her so. For example, there is Marie Antoinette. She was sufficiently indiscreet and charming as it was; but because a rather prudish or stupid Swedish Count chose to cut out some of the pages of her correspondence with Fersen, she has been put among the infernal; and there was a child or two of Queen Elizabeth's always cropping up; and there are the stories, absolutely without foundation, of the late unhappy Empress of Russia and the unpleasant Rasputin!

There is no doubt that Mary Stuart owes more of her prestige to her reputation, among the romantic, as a *grande amoureuse* than to her beauty, her noble qualities or her misfortunes. Balzac and Maurice Hewlett and Swinburne (fancy Swinburne's having been requested to "do" a serious article on the Queen of Scots in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*!) have made her of the type of that Venus who, according to Shakespeare, bored Adonis so fearfully. On the other hand, there are those who have petitioned Rome for her canonization and who even hope for it still.

Mr. Mumby's "The Fall of Mary Stuart" is not a volume for the scientific historian. It does not always go directly to the sources; but it is an ideal book for intelligent readers who want plain facts supported by reasonably authentic testimony. Besides, Mr. Mumby is not a partisan, and by the use of the pith of letters, he shows us some things, generally slurred, in a clear light; he does not pretend to intuition, and it is a relief for the reader delighting in the vulgarization of history to find an author who follows closely the text before him, and simply tells us directly what he could, with diligence, find out.

It is refreshing not to hear the usual talk about the influence of the corrupt court of Catharine de Médicis on the morals of her daughter-in-law. In fact when one takes into account the amount of study, necessary on Mary's part and at her age, to make her one of the most accomplished princesses of a time remarkable for the learning of its well-born women, one wonders how she could have found leisure for dallying in the primrose path. There is no evidence that she seduced the foolish Chastelard—poets are very easily encouraged! As for Rizzio, any man of cultivation, loyal to her, would have been hated and done to death by that group of hulking scoundrels, both Protestant and Catholic, who helped to send her to her doom. There were exceptions, of course, like Lord Herries; but they were exceptions.

Mr. Mumby holds no brief for or against the Casket Letters. Here the judicious will approve of him. He admits that the wretched Machiavelli of reform, George Buchanan, was capable of anything; and as for John Knox, he was one of the proofs that there is nothing worse than theological hatred, except theological politics.

Mary's relations with Bothwell are still inexplicable. There was every apparent political reason in favour of her marriage with Lord Darnley, political reasons, however, which Queen Elizabeth would not have accepted, if she had not determined to be a virgin. Investigation after Darnley's death showed that he had been afflicted with a disease even more terrible than smallpox, and this Mary may have discovered. He was certainly, if we may accept the evidence of these letters, a sulky, envious and jealous brute; yet there is so far no evidence that she compassed his death, for she lived among liars, and even M. Nau, whom all readers of her chronicles would desire to respect, had his moment of weakness.

As to the "Lords," the suggestion of the papal nuncio that their "removal" would have been a good thing for the general welfare, must meet the prompt approval of the unregenerate.

It was these Lords who helped to bring about her marriage with Lord Bothwell; they united almost to a man in forcing this powerful subject upon her. There is every reason to believe that she was forced in the physical sense, too, by their connivance. But how can one solve the enigma that she, a devout Catholic, whom the Pope, Pius V, had befriended when all the other rulers in Europe were antagonistic or lukewarm, could accept, with the formality of a Protestant ceremony, a man divorced for adultery by the Protestant authorities and whose marriage to Lady Bothwell was declared by certain complaisant Scottish Catholic prelates never to have existed! It was then that Pope Pius V, whose diplomacy had many flaws, deserted her, and her Dominican confessor immediately left her, declaring, however, that until the affair of the marriage with Bothwell, she was a most worthy princess.

The ceremony of the marriage to Bothwell was blessed by the same reformed Archbishop who had divorced that lord. Mr. Mumby quotes evidence to show how wretchedly unhappy she was on the very day of the marriage; she longed for death; yet she clung closely to the jealous and obnoxious Duke of Orkney even when the Lords, treacherous as usual, backed by the honest people of Scotland, Catholics and Protestants, turned against her and him.

There is a plausible explanation suggested in these letters, that Mary after her capture by Bothwell, expected to be enceinte, and that her pride would not endure the thought that the offspring of this forced marriage should be branded with illegitimacy.

Elizabeth's letters are models of the kind of epistles that the unjust steward of the parable might have written. They are concentrated examples of selfish hypocrisy. Mary is desirous of proving her innocence of the murder of Darnley if "her dear sister" will permit her to see her; her "dear sister," ignoring the dogma in which she firmly believed, that a queen could only be judged by her peers, is too "pure" to receive the Queen of Scots until she is "purged" in advance by a jury of her inferiors and enemies; nor will she permit, as Mary requests, that she shall submit the proofs of her innocence to her peers, the other rulers of Europe.

¹ "The Fall of Mary Stuart." Frank A. Mumby. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. \$5.00.

As for her malignant accuser, George Buchanan, his imagination is evidently very unlike that of a modern old Scot who, observing a young woman in the compartment of a train, hastily pulling down her rather short skirt, remarked consolingly, "Dinna ye worry, lassie; I hae only one passion and that's for whusky!"

If George Buchanan had confined himself to whisky the Casket Letters would probably have never been "amended" or written at all. But this is going further than Mr. Mumby's extremely interesting text, made up of letters joined by threads of narrative, permits us to go. Let us hope that later he will make another volume including the last pathetic letters of this princess who held so firmly to a regal state that to the last she pleaded that the "dais," the symbol of her rank, might not be taken from her by her relentless "sister."

Lord Knollys, Elizabeth's commissioner, writes to his Queen that Mary Stuart "is a notable woman," and he begs for honest dealing on the part of Elizabeth. "If you have not pity on me now," the Queen of Scots writes to her virgin "sister," "it is all over with my son, my country and myself."

The after wanderings of Bothwell are legends in the Scandinavian countries. It is known that he had certain matrimonial difficulties with a maid of Norway. The Danish King, Frederick II, no doubt believing that an accomplished pirate of his kind might be useful, refused to deliver him to the Scots lords. He was imprisoned at Malmö, and his body, very much embalmed, was recently shown in the little church of Farweile in Denmark.

A compliment which one may pay Mr. Mumby is that his volume is one of the few books on Mary Stuart that give uninterpreted texts, and leave much to the judgment of the reader.

MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN.

AN ORTHODOX PSYCHOLOGY.

WHILE Professor Woodworth's "Psychology" is mainly intended for use in college classes, it has a claim to more attentive consideration than textbooks are in the habit of receiving. It is a clearly worded presentation of the main body of doctrine at present held by the orthodox school of American psychology. Substantially, Professor Woodworth is a moderate introspectionist. Unlike the thoroughgoing behaviorists, he cheerfully accepts consciousness as a datum of experience. Many of his observations and "laws" are of introspective origin; but a large portion of his book, being based on inference from controlled experiments, should prove thoroughly acceptable to the behaviorist, even if his theoretical standpoint is not.

But what is Professor Woodworth's theoretical standpoint? He does not define his position in set terms but leaves it to be gathered from his treatment of the subject. He is prepared to accept the findings of any approaches to the science that bid fair to yield intelligible and mutually consistent results. The human mind, one may imagine him to say, is a difficult enough thing to get at in any event. We do not know exactly what it is, nor can we satisfactorily define it in terms of observable activity or of underlying physiology. But we can make shift to piece together some notion of the "mental life" by sidling up to it, as it were, from different points of view. Introspection may be a dangerously elusive method, for the moment of consciousness that we set out to describe can not be strictly synchronous with the moment of observation. In a sense, introspective psychology must be a kind of lifting of oneself by one's bootstraps. Yet common sense has

always approved of introspection as a guide to knowledge of the mind, and rightly so. It is merely necessary to remember that the knowledge so arrived at is not gleaned from the whole and steady contemplation of actually existent "states of mind," but is laboriously constructed from such partial glimpses of mental experience as the memory can hold to. The resulting psychology has not a leg to stand on, yet it possesses a powerful intuitive warrant that no amount of behavioristic heckling can impair. Our survey of the mind is somewhat like the notion a bird gets of his cage. He can not see the whole of the cage, because he is always occupying some portion of it; but by flitting about from perch to perch, the bird, if a philosopher, can formulate a very workable theory of its shape, its size, and of the relations of its parts.

But Professor Woodworth is by no means limited to introspectionist data. He is as firm a believer in the value of the inferences concerning mental process and discrimination yielded by conditioned reflex-experiments and tests as any behaviorist. He assumes (again on the basis of intuitive common sense rather than of a philosophical examination) that the inner feel of alien minds is similar to that of his own, and that he is warranted in hitching on psychic inferences from the behaviour of human beings other than himself to the descriptive analysis of mental states and processes that introspection yields him in the first place. Roughly speaking, introspection provides the qualitative basis of psychology, while behavioristic observation introduces measure: but only roughly, for the two methods are interdependent.

It is not a neat discipline, this orthodox psychology of Professor Woodworth's. Confessedly it can but be a thing of compromise, a somewhat patchy structure at the crossroads leading to two mighty sciences of the future—a physiology, delicate, quantitative, and completely integrated, which will have absorbed the present behaviour-psychology with the utmost sang-froid; and a self-contained science of consciousness which will be able to build up a functional theory of the psyche without concerning itself in the least with physiological mechanisms. The nature of the relation between these two disciplines will be, as it has always been, a matter of philosophy. There can be no objection to Professor Woodworth's standpoint. As long as neither physiology nor psychology is the delicate and integrated interpretation of personality that it may one day become, a mixed method and a constantly shifting point of view are probably the most acceptable approach to the study of behaviour.

Personality is only beginning to be apprehended as the true subject-matter of both physiology and psychology. The orthodox psychologist, in spite of formal denials, has limited himself in the main to a descriptive inventory of selected phases of consciousness or behaviour. It is as though one tried to get a unified idea of a house by a close scrutiny of its parts (doors as doors, a random stretch of brick wall, fire-place, the flooring of a bedroom, and a bit of roof). Only the vaguest conception of the true nature and purpose of a house would emerge. The reading of Professor Woodworth's "Psychology," and of other psychologies of its type, leaves one with a subtle sense of dissatisfaction. One has a persistent feeling that the mind has been more or less competently anatomized; but that its functioning, its individual history, and its purpose, if one may use a dangerous word, remain obscure.

Professor Woodworth is best in his fundamental chapters, such as those on native and acquired traits, emotion, the feelings, and sensation. He does not carry the reader along with him quite so convincingly in the more synthetic chapters. What he says about such topics as imagination, will and personality, has a decidedly tentative air. Perhaps the strangest thing about the book is its failure to explain fully the nature of thought. Reasoning, which is handled immediately after perception, is but a highly specialized, inhibited, purposively directed, type of thought. Very little reasoning is done by human beings.

EDWARD SAPIR.

¹ "Psychology, a Study of Mental Life." Robert S. Woodworth. New York: Henry Holt & Co. \$3.00.

A PROPHET IN PAINT.

IN our day, the supreme need of mankind has become the need to escape, the need to break altogether clear of the welter and jangle and dehumanized regimentation which has grown up in our midst under the compulsion of the industrial era. Sometimes this need is not consciously recognized even by those most suffering from it. They rush about crying that the "established order" must be preserved—and frantically seeking distraction through any means that comes to hand. Yet it is the same hunger which chiefly animates them. Everywhere, consciously or no, this hunger has become the supervening impulse that motivates our society. It is the wonder of Paul Gauguin that he achieved the escape for which we are all so desperately seeking.

One day, already in middle life, virtually without friends and dreaming a little wistfully of being the "first painter of the tropics," Paul Gauguin chanced upon a newspaper-clipping which said that in Tahiti all the food that one needed might be had for the picking. The assurance turned out as illusory as a good many newspaper-statements are; but it proved determining. Gauguin promptly packed up his things, left for this beneficent spot, and passed into the pathway of his richest accomplishment. When Renoir heard of the decision, he shrugged his shoulders. "Tahiti?" said he. "One can paint as well at Batignolles." There is much justice in this statement; it applies well, furthermore, to Gauguin. So special was his feeling for the South Seas and their people, that without this stimulus, it is true, his work would probably have lacked something of its final intensity. But Paul Gauguin was a prodigious worker wherever he might be, and an instinctive foe of all the falsity and affectation of the Western order. He had painted great pictures before ever he took up his life in the South Sea Islands, and they were pictures with essentially the same characteristics that mark his best-known work. To suppose that he would not have brought his protest to approximately the same stage of development, no matter what his setting and subject-matter, is to misunderstand the most obvious things about him. Yet it is none the less idle to suppose that his influence would have become what it has, that it would have passed so far beyond the world of paint-tubes and studios, without the South Sea element to assist it. For this element has given in unmistakable terms, alike to the life and art of Gauguin, a dramatized form. Without in the least impairing the absolute artistry of the things he wrought, it has underscored the full meaning of the man as a whole. It has heightened his central intent, and been the means of making him one of the most suggestive figures of our time.

In the first comprehensive book on Gauguin that has been written in English,¹ John Gould Fletcher makes clear the implications of this wider aspect of the man. He begins with an account of the hectic, forlorn uprising of 1848 in Paris, in the midst of which Gauguin was born; he ends with a summary of the collapse of an industrialized world. In between, he links all the divagations of this implacable and bitterly harassed fighter against the workings of his iron milieu, artistic and mundane. This is splendid work, splendidly done; so is Mr. Fletcher's account of the man himself.

From every standpoint of the middle-class world which has never quite ceased sparring at Gauguin, the external facts of the life with which Mr. Fletcher is here dealing were, of course, horrific. As Gauguin himself kept recalling, with a bitter contempt for the groundlings who mouthed the phrase, he "abandoned his wife and children." His relations with the women who were adventurous enough to love him were notably casual. The cast of his nature, accentuated perhaps by the half-Spanish lineage which gave it birth, made him, as Strindberg of all people, put it, pleased to antagonize others. As a guest, a position which he was frequently forced to occupy, he

was undeniably trying, even if the hostess did not happen to interest him. All this and much more Mr. Fletcher scrupulously records; and then he cleaves straight through it to the great, kindly, delicate, unflinching heart of the man he is depicting.

Here and there, perhaps, he is a trifle too summary. The motives which may have actuated Gauguin, after his return from the first Tahitian venture, in rigging up a sort of Mardi-Gras-like studio and parading Paris in costume, will, for instance, stand a good deal more investigation than Mr. Fletcher bestows upon them. It is a pity, too, that he inquires so slightly—though possibly this is for lack of sufficient material—into the relations between Gauguin and the South Sea natives among whom he lived. The essence of the man, however, Mr. Fletcher sets down in distinct and memorable fashion. To the somewhat slender store of information available concerning Gauguin's life, he has, to be sure, nothing to contribute; but to the subject as a whole, he brings a deep and vivifying understanding.

He shows Gauguin as a boy, absorbing the exotic decorative grandeur that abounds in Peru; during the tragic interval of the visit to van Gogh; as a man of forty, playing instructor to the rabble of excited young painters who gathered about him at Pont-Avon; during the long travail of his concluding years in the South Seas, when he fought an accumulation of wasting diseases, fought petty cliques of petty officials, waited perpetually for moneys that did not come, and out of the abundance of his anguish, worked out in paint and sculpture the problem of his own integrity. It is a terrible and beautiful story, an epic of pure art touching the depths of human misery and the heights of human nobility. To say that Mr. Fletcher has brought out its full values, is to give exceedingly high praise to his treatment of it. It deserves exceedingly high praise. He has done a sympathetic and glowing portrait, an artist's rendering of another artist.

This is so fine a thing, and so much the most important thing in this connexion that in the face of it, to take any exceptions to Mr. Fletcher's book seems almost churlish. He has not attempted anything like a full-length, formal biography; and all that he has attempted, he has done well. He writes, despite a few rather surprising lapses, with an ease and unaffected simplicity that are particularly gratifying in these days, and he has organized his book with a remarkable ingenuity. He shows, also, a clear comprehension of the painting with which he deals. He understands not only the mechanics but the broader aims of the various movements that gyrate about Gauguin, and his study of Gauguin as a synthesist is a distinguished piece of work. Paul Gauguin was by no means a simple character; to the last, he was one of the most inconsistent personalities that ever lived. By infinite application and an almost violent act of will, he imposed a pervasive unity upon nearly all his work; but this inconsistency in his nature is present there nevertheless.

Mr. Fletcher's task is so much the resolution of the conflicts in the man which have baffled the stupid, so much the demonstration of his essential singleness of aim, that perhaps he does rightly to avoid this phase of the subject. It still calls for examination, none the less. Primarily, Gauguin was a decorator. As such, the solutions he worked out, beginning, very significantly, with thirteenth-century glass, were in the noblest classical tradition. Along with this, however, he combined a good deal of distinctly unclassical matter, which, need one say? had nothing to do with his subject-matter as such. In the study of the resultant question, anyone who is not quite the proper person may very easily go wrong, and one wishes that some one with Mr. Fletcher's feeling for the larger qualities of Gauguin might undertake it.

The main point, however, remains unaffected. It is the point of human freedom and dignity, and of the release from an order which is a denial of both; and Mr. Fletcher makes it triumphantly manifest. In the course of his book, he quotes many of Gauguin's aphorisms on art. One wishes that he might have included the one in

¹ "Paul Gauguin, His Life and Art." John Gould Fletcher. New York: Nicholas L. Brown. \$3.00.

which Gauguin, speaking of the thing his life had sought above all else to establish, defined it as

the right to dare everything in art in the name of the spirit. The absolute and legitimate domination of thought over nature, and the need of the artist to express thought by artistic means, equivalent to nature's own.

The pith and core of the man are in that utterance. It is the principle which, so long applied in Chinese painting, has made that art so curiously moving at its best; and it is the principle which above all others needs considered sponsoring in our time. It does not call for any sanction, any dogma, any particular setting, and it is one of its profoundest beauties that it does not. In can be achieved at Batignolles. LOUIS BAURY.

TWO ROMANTICS.

MR. COMPTON MACKENZIE has done it again, or rather he has gone back to his earlier manner and his first love. After a series of rather facetious romances in *C major*, or, as a journalist would put it, in lighter vein, he has just published¹ a long prelude to a still longer novel which, presumably, will deal with the career of a priest in our time. Mr. Compton Mackenzie has always had a certain weakness for High-Churchery, veiled becomingly by persiflage; and for the sake of the persiflage, his weakness has always been pardoned him by his admirers, whom he also enables to chat learnedly about double swings and the difference between Transubstantiation and the Real Presence. But the new book will infuriate even those confirmed Mackenzians who managed to survive "*Sylvia Scarlett*" and "*The Vanity Girl*." All the ecclesiasticism is there, minus the persiflage. The author has evidently attempted to compose a preliminary picture of the Anglo-Catholic movement in England before the war, and has so far succeeded that at the end we swim in an aromatic atmosphere of incense, clerestories, Gothic cusps, Gregorian chants, Erastian bishops, jolly slum parsons, and weird Anglican monks. Nor are merely the passionate externals of Mr. Mackenzie's religion always with us in this story, the double theme of which seems to be what the author in all seriousness continually calls the necessity for grace and the reality of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Let all the flippant souls who revelled in the novelty and richness of Mr. Mackenzie's art, from the red dawn of "*Carnival*" to the sad sunsets of "*Plashers Mead*," flee this disconcerting novel as the worldlings of Alexandria fled the accusing voice of Paphnutius. There is no sex-interest: the only woman in the book, the sister of a rural rector, becomes a nun in a manner so inconsequential that it suggests Daisy Ashford rather than Mary Magdalene. The scene which precipitates this event is a good enough example of Mr. Compton Mackenzie's last phase:

The squire pulled himself up by the ivy and struck the image on the face. . . . 'When you pray for me in your convent of greensick women, my dear Essie, don't forget that your patron saint was kicked from her pedestal by your lover.' . . . Starling was as good as his word, but the effort he made to throw over the saint, carried him with it; his foot catching in the ivy, he fell head downward and was killed.

Did we mention Daisy Ashford? We should rather have cited the authoress of "*St. Elmo*," or "*Why She Left the Village*," as appropriate to such writing, which is surely a little sad in a man who once had it in him to write the life and death of Jenny Pearl. But all of the faithful who have stuck to Mr. Mackenzie through the galloping consumption of his artistic sense, will put up with this as they have with much more—the Cockney humour, the abuse of words, the Keatsian vocabulary and the elaborately nonchalant mannerisms which at first glance look studied, and are in reality only lazy.

There is much in the book to please those who have a taste for the *milieu*, or a weakness for the author's æsthetic-Salvation mentality. Years ago, in attacking a trashy book which had a great vogue, "*When It Was Dark*," a disgusted reviewer prophesied an impending

wave of ritualistic novels. Even in America, some still more juvenile Scott Fitzgerald, issuing from Harvard more concerned with sacraments than with flappers, will give us an intimate and popular picture of the soul of a Cowley Father. But so far, "*The Altar Steps*" is the first of the crop which merits any serious mention. Only, in spite of its Father Rowleys, Brother Georges and other magnificent Holy Joes, one feels that Mr. Compton Mackenzie betrays more than a little of the pietism which he so loves to satirize in his churchy young men, and one recalls a sentence strikingly appropriate to the society he describes. "Holy simplicity is all very well, but holy imbecility is a great bore."

Mr. Cabell seems to be another writer at present engaged in somewhat monotonously exploiting a single talent. I yield to no one in liking the famous and unfortunate "Jurgen," but the life of a creative writer can not consist in a succession of "Jurgens," as Mr. Cabell himself very well proved when he wrote "*Figures of Earth*." Nevertheless there are people who in contradiction to all psychologic laws, can never have too much of a good thing; witness Mr. Hugh Walpole who contributed an enthusiastic preface to "*Figures of Earth*." Mr. Louis Untermeyer (who is a poet) has just written another, no less commendatory, for "*Gallantry*."¹ Having gotten rid of my own copy at the first possible moment, I can not recall exactly what recondite quality aroused Mr. Untermeyer's admiration, but I think it was that which used to be called the poetical passages. That is Mr. Cabell's fatal weakness, his Achilles's heel—the poetical passages. Every ten pages or so, after an interval of tempered and often delightful writing, the sort of literary prima donna which slumbers in him awakes ecstatically, and then we have a grand poetical passage, profusely accompanied by "ohs" and "ahs" like a coruscant geyser of skyrockets, and sprinkled by weird Gothic words and still weirder syntax. It is exactly like the coloratura passages in Italian opera, and by the abuse of this mannerism, Mr. Cabell is occasionally as trying as Madame Tetrassini indulging in a bravura ten minutes in duration. Apart from this technical detail, "*Gallantry*" considered as fiction, seems to me, frankly, very sad stuff. By way of contrast in the same genre, we recommend Mr. Compton Mackenzie's virgin novel, "*The Passionate Elopement*," as an indication of how sweetly this Georgian foppery and literary Brummellism can be accomplished once for all, and should never be tried again.

In a time when the lust for establishing derivations seems to be one of the few resources left to the critic, we are surprised that no one has remarked the analogy between Mr. Cabell and Maurice Hewlett. Both are great "romanticks," as they would perhaps write the word, both "traffick" on the strange seas of past centuries, and both employ a special and rather operatic style. But in the case of Hewlett, the emotional stuff of great tragedy has sometimes sprung untrammelled by all the archæology and foppishness; in short, he has written "*Richard*" and "*The Queen's Quair*." Speaking for myself, I have too much enjoyed "Jurgen" and "*Beyond Life*," not to wish that some day our one authentic American fantast will do as much. CUTHBERT WRIGHT.

SHORTER NOTICES.

IN his life of Donald G. Mitchell,¹ Mr. Waldo H. Dunn has sketched the chief events in the career of a lovable literary figure of nineteenth-century America. The author of "*Reveries of a Bachelor*" was, until middle life, one of many cultivated Americans of his time who were never quite at home either in the United States or the Old World. He drifted back and forth across the Atlantic, wandered in England and on the Continent, lived for a time in New York, Washington and on a Connecticut farm, dabbled in law and journalism and farming, and spent dreary intervals in the consular service. His ambition to become a man of letters was checked inwardly by a morbid lack of confidence in his powers, and outwardly by the drift of the times which, naturally enough, in a rapidly developing

¹"*Gallantry*." James Branch Cabell. New York: Robert McBride. \$2.00.

²"*The Life of Donald G. Mitchell*." Waldo H. Dunn. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$4.50

¹"*The Altar Steps*." Compton Mackenzie. London: Cassell & Co.

country, was towards the life of action. But he managed finally to express himself in work that appealed to his time; the audience that was deaf to the barbaric yawp of our first great provincial, listened raptly to the travelled and scholarly Ik Marvel's fireside sentiment. Washington Irving put the seal of success on "Reveries of Bachelor" and "Dream Life," and Donald G. Mitchell became a lion. With his reputation made, the young author married and, after one more unsuccessful attempt to make the consular service an economic basis for the literary life, returned to farming in Connecticut. Here the happiness of the husband and the husbandman to which he had looked forward so many years, all but filled his life for a time. But presently he found himself deeply in debt and was forced to farm his talent as well as the three hundred acres he had bought near New Haven, Connecticut. He began again to write steadily for the best magazines of the day, essays and editorials that were, as gracious and charming as his two great successes. He continued well into old age to work his vein of kindly sentiment for a large audience of ardent admirers; and when he died, virtually all his dreams of a happy domestic life in a farm-home of his own, of reputation achieved, of much literary work well done, had come true.

Mr. Dunn's biography is quite uncritical. It isolates and idealizes a subject which might have been made extremely interesting if he had been shown in relation to his times and with less of breathless wonder. Why was Ik Marvel a household name in the United States in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and why are this pseudonym and the name, Donald G. Mitchell, almost unknown to our generation? A biography which had interpreted Mr. Mitchell's life in the light of this speculation need not have slighted his talent and his vanished fame, and might have been an important contribution to the history of literary taste in America. As it is, Mr. Dunn has simply put another jar of sweet conserve on the shelves of the public libraries, where eulogy passes for biology. E. T. B.

SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND, President of the Royal Geographical Society, in an address to the Union Society of the University College, London, maintained "that geography should be taken to include a description of the natural beauty of the earth's features." This lecture and another on the same theme are included in "The Heart of Nature, or the Quest for Natural Beauty,"¹ which expands the thesis to book length. Sir Francis Younghusband's exhortation to love nature and to behold beauty is pitched in a high key. He seems to be shouting against a doubt in his own mind, or in the group mind of the Royal Geographical Society, that nature is altogether lovable and beautiful. Perhaps, again, the secret of his vehemence lies in the last paragraph of his preface, where he writes: "And if any other country excel us in appreciation, then it behooves us to brace ourselves up to emulate and surpass that country and learn how to understand nature better and see more beauty. For in love of natural beauty, and in capacity for communicating that love, England ought to be pre-eminent." The distinguished author courts natural beauty as rashly and valiantly as one would expect from this; his courage and strength and endurance could conquer Mt. Everest, it seems; but his love of natural beauty seems to us to go unrequited. The coquette somehow eludes Sir Francis Younghusband's power of expression. In fact, only so much of her is captured in this book as can be seen or heard in a good stereopticon lecture.

E. T. B.

It is remarkable that a publisher should have the insight to bring out this book,² for it is obviously written by a man with little literary equipment and it has some of those mistakes in English that are usually a bar to publication. In spite of its faults, it is well worth reading; and as a piece of human expression it is far superior to most of the literate novels that contrive to get themselves talked about. The author is said to be a prize fighter, and the book has that sort of appeal which an artless but highly sincere use of actual experience can give. The author, probably because he found the ordinary technique of a novel rather difficult, writes his book in a series of episodes, some of which are very impressive, and show strong feeling. There is something almost epic about the first episode in the book, which deals with the boy's mother and uncle. Of the uncle it is said: "He had stolen poetry from every nook and cranny of life. It was said by Irishmen who were ever keen judges of fighters that he could tear a bulldog to pieces. He had once been locked in a saloon with six men; it was to

be a battle to a finish. A short time after, great fists crashed through a wooden panelled door. A mighty demon of a man walked out. His clothing hung in shreds about his huge body. The six men lay prostrate on the floor, tables and, the bar had been turned over, and the debris of wreckage was everywhere." Emmett Lawlor is a prize fighter of an intellectual cast of mind, and with an interest in art and literature. He convinces you that the prize fighter is a man of genius who desires to express himself in combat as a poet expresses himself in verses. However, Mr. Tully has looked too long on bad models; the Sunday newspapers, the sentimentalities of the physical-culture papers, and the cheap magazines. Emotionally he can be relied upon, but intellectually he has never achieved the knowledge which would enable him to distinguish the rare from the obvious; and that is, in short, the whole fault of the book.

M. M. C.

A REVIEWER'S NOTEBOOK.

I SAID some time ago in these columns that I thought the next step in criticism would be to take into account the relation of all the spiritual activities of mankind to the economic system under which they are carried on. It was an *obiter dictum*, representing an idea which I have long had in mind but for lack of leisure can not expect ever to develop in any significant way; and I put it down merely on the chance that it might touch the imagination of some one who would sift the idea and see what was in it, and if it yielded anything worth developing, would perhaps be interested in working it out to its full logical length. I had no thought of recurring to it, and should not do so now but for the fact that I have been struck by the extraordinary character of the misapprehensions that my remark has suffered, and still more by the kind of people who have so misunderstood it. One correspondent, for example, says that he regrets to find me advocating "the economic interpretation of literature!" While I was puzzling over this, another correspondent wrote to me deprecating my belief "that sociology is the ally of criticism." *Sociology!* I could only rub my eyes and exclaim, "How exceedingly odd!" Other correspondents presently added to my bewilderment, and I felt great confusion of face at perceiving that they were by no means merely contentious and inconsiderable persons, at whom one looks and passes by, but quite the contrary. If these persons, I thought, have such truly remarkable notions of what was in my mind when I wrote those few words, the person for whom the remark was really intended—the not impossible he or she who might without prejudice examine the idea and perhaps find it fruitful—is not likely to get very far with it unless I present it in a little more intelligible fashion.

I do not know, I can not even make a plausible guess at what my correspondent means by the economic interpretation of literature. His further observation that we have lately had too much of it, however, indicates that whatever it may be, it is not at all what I spoke of and had in mind; for of this we have had none, either lately or at any time. My suggestion was that criticism should take into account the economic systems which form the foundation of certain civilizations, as conditioning the progress and practice of any mode of spiritual activity within those civilizations. For the most part this would be done implicitly rather than explicitly. If upon examination, that is, it should turn out that the economic system upon which we have built our civilization, for example, does actually impose conditions, directly and indirectly, upon the progress and practice of the arts; and if the nature, extent and relative importance of those conditions were measurably determined; then the critic who had these findings in mind would shape his criticism differently and to better purpose than the critic who was unacquainted with them or who passed them over as negligible. These findings, in short, would properly become a part of the critic's general scientific apparatus, like the findings about climate, say, or those about morbid pathology. This is all that my suggestion amounts to, and I can not possibly see how it looks towards an "economic interpretation of literature," whatever that

¹"The Heart of Nature, or The Quest for Natural Beauty." Sir Francis Younghusband, New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., \$5.00.

²"Emmett Lawlor," Jim Tully, New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, \$1.90.

may be, any more than I see how, on the grounds just stated, I could be said to advocate a climatic or a pathological interpretation of literature. Still less do I see how my unpretending statement could remind any one of the technical glossary of the sociologists. Sociology may, I presume, under special circumstances become in some sense an ally of criticism; but I never said that it was, and indeed the idea is so far-fetched that it never occurred to me.

No more did it occur to me to suggest to the critic an exclusive preoccupation with economics, which may possibly be the thing that my friend had in mind when he spoke of the economic interpretation of literature. Indeed, I should think it unnecessary to warn any person whose imagination may be touched by my modest proposal about the next step in criticism, that *any* exclusive preoccupation is against the critical temper and should be resisted. Any new theory or new adaptation nearly always carries its originator too far; and if not him, it invariably carries his disciples too far. The findings of morbid pathology or of climatology, for instance, should not be unduly stressed, their importance should not be exaggerated; nor, on the other hand, should they be underestimated or treated as though they had no importance, no legitimate place in a critic's apparatus. I do not say that the influence of an economic system on the progress and practice of the arts should be over-emphasized; I do say that it should be determined. I do not say that the critic should exaggerate its importance; I do say that he should recognize whatever importance it may, upon examination, turn out to possess, and shape his work accordingly.

PERHAPS the economic system has no such influence, or perhaps its influence is so slight as to amount to nothing; perhaps, on the other hand, this influence is very considerable, so considerable that determination of it would add an extremely useful implement to the working-apparatus of criticism. I have an opinion in the matter, but that is not to the point. The point is that the thing should be looked into, inasmuch as there is sufficient likelihood that something worth while would come of such an investigation. Probably my present opinion would not be wholly justified; yet, probably, the practice of criticism would gain somewhat in precision, definiteness and clearness. The indications are, on the whole, that a little work upon this question would be well spent, and I therefore suggested it as possibly profitable, and even went so far as to suggest what seemed to me a good beginning. The economic system prevailing in the United States is that of exploitation through monopoly; that is to say, by legalized control of certain primary monopolies, an owning and exploiting class, comprising a relatively small number of persons, is able to appropriate without compensation the labour-products of the remainder of the population. This system, moreover, has reached an extraordinarily high degree of development. A history of civilization in the United States would therefore largely be a history of this development, and this research would in great part bring out and make clear the relations, if any exist, between this system and the progress of the spiritual activities of the people. Nothing like this, as far as I know, has been done; it would be on all accounts a valuable work, and therefore to be recommended quite apart from the special purpose in which I am interested, and which it would, I think, be bound to serve.

OTHER works, too, dealing with other systems or with different degrees of development in the same system, naturally suggest themselves. I have often thought, for instance, that a very clarifying side light could be thrown upon this subject and upon the general theory of democracy as well, by a study of those strange and interesting encysted economic bodies, the mediæval monasteries. The works of Montalembert and de Maistre give a remarkable insight into the relations between the economic system and the practice of the arts, and they show at the

same time that the authors are not in the least aware of the implications of what they are saying. They are therefore an extraordinarily fascinating study. It would be inappropriate now to say more about it, even if I had the space to do so. I may perhaps without impropriety, however, merely hint that the National Catholic Welfare Council might find it worth while to do something with the subject, and that they have already at hand Mr. Egan and Mr. Hayes, who in spirit and temper, scholarship and literary skill, furnish in combination a notable equipment for just that task.

BUT what encourages me especially to press my original suggestion, is my observation of the turn that certain minds are taking. I have already spoken of the work of Mr. Stearns and his thirty associates in the symposium on our civilization, and shown how importunate are the questions that it raises, how unmistakable the direction in which it points. I am sure that my superior officer in this department, Mr. Van Wyck Brooks, will not take amiss my remarking the tendency shown in his books, in "America's Coming-of-Age," and more distinctly in his essay on Mark Twain, since I do it not to complain that the tendency goes no farther, but in all gratitude and satisfaction that it goes as far as it does. In these books, as in his essay in Mr. Stearns's symposium, Mr. Van Wyck Brooks is never for a moment out of whispering distance from the set of relations that I speak of. If he had in mind a clear picture of the economic system upon which our civilization is based, it seems inevitable that he would draw inferences from it that would have profoundly affected the whole plan and substance of his work. I do not say that these inferences should be the same as those that I would draw; they might be, doubtless would be, quite different. All I say is that one would perceive at once his work to be that of a man who had a true and distinct conception of our underlying economic system; whereas now, one perceives at once that it is the work of a man who has no such conception, and no idea that it may be at all important to the purpose in hand that he should have it.

BUT the very tendency shown by Mr. Brooks and by many other contemporary writers, the tendency persistently to skirt and go about and draw continually closer to this set of relations, convinces me that my suggestion is worth considering. I fasten upon Mr. Brooks not only because he shows this tendency so conspicuously, but also because he is a friend, and one may use one's friends as a *corpus vile* upon occasion when the service is not altogether agreeable, without risk of offence. Instinct is invariably sound; and I have repeatedly observed of late how instinctive this tendency seems to be; how naturally, and apparently in spite of themselves, those who occupy themselves with the arts, particularly with literature, keep on the fringe of the problem which I am recommending for investigation. Perhaps I am a little partial to it, but really it seems one of the most interesting problems in the world. Consider one aspect of it, by way of example. Mr. Stearns's symposium has a good deal to say about the various formative and directive agencies that are at work upon the public taste, such as the press, the school, college, university, theatre, pulpit (though this last is not specifically dealt with). Now, the actual practice of literature, music, and indeed all the arts, is quite obviously affected by the quality of public taste. Would it not therefore be worth a critic's while to know how, and how far, the operation of these agencies is influenced by the basic economic system? I think so; and there are many questions of like depth and scope arising out of this highly differentiated problem, about which I have now said, probably, all that I shall ever say. I wish it might be enough to provoke some enterprising imagination; but it is at least enough to show that I am not interested in "the economic interpretation of literature," and that I am immeasurably far from putting sociology forward as the ally of criticism.

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LATEST WORK OF FICTION, ENTITLED

"Phantom"

"Hauptmann, the most original of contemporary German writers," says the Encyclopædia Britannica, "stands, more or less, alone." The story will continue for about fifteen weeks. One who has read it comments thus:

I have no hesitation in pronouncing it a remarkable literary achievement. You might call the book a number of things—a study in abnormal psychology, a proof that a criminal deed may have its origin in a beneficent impulse. It is told with a beautiful simplicity, and yet the master technician is evident in the sure strokes under which the story grows.

An obscure clerk whose life is devoted to worthy but uninspired ideals perceives, in a golden-haired child, the first beauty that has come into his life. This unattainable vision unbalances him and proves to be the beginning of his undoing. A wild but not impossible story follows; intrigues and plotting culminate in a murder. The actual criminal is executed, but the narrator is convicted as an accessory, goes through a period of imprisonment, and tells the tale upon his release and redemption.

The revelation of the workings of a commonplace mind, its reactions to suggestion, is worthy of Dostoevsky. The tale lends itself admirably to interpretation by the measure of the most modern psychology.

It is not merely a drab story of crime. Hauptmann's art weaves the whole into a fabric of beauty. And it is not without its worldly and sensational elements, though these—in the underworld of a large city—enter with a certain inevitability and are not introduced merely because readers love thrills. There is no hero, but there is a villain and there are victims.

If the theme and execution suggest Dostoevsky, the faith in the regenerating power of love is Hauptmann's own. It carries conviction to the most sceptical.

Does your subscription terminate during the next ten or fifteen weeks? If so, renew at once so as not to miss the Hauptmann story. "Phantom" will be widely discussed.

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